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FEBRUARY 6, 2014

VALENTINE'S SPECIAL

Finding the right partner

Finding the right diamond

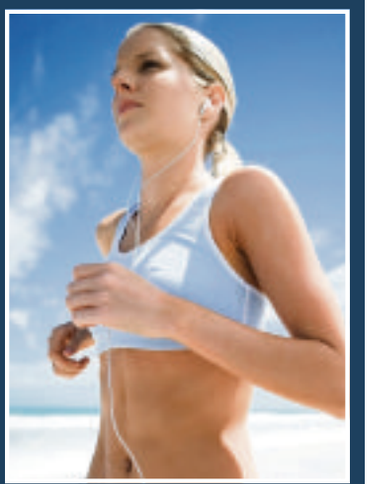
PLUS

Where to go

What to do

What to eat

Inside



8 Great Fitness Myths crushed

P56

Residents express concern at scale of development

Can Island cope with another skyscraper?

Beth.Allcock
@wharf.co.uk

South Quay may be remade as a "place for people" – as developers desire – but Islanders are fearful there are just going to be too many of them.

Up to 50 residents attended a public meeting to judge Berkeley Homes' skyscraper plan and voiced their concerns to developers about overcrowding, transport, noise and affordable housing.

They are familiar themes on the Isle of Dogs with local Tower Hamlets councillors arguing developers' wish to be close to Canary Wharf should be matched to proposals that will ease pressure on the community – such as new schools and health facilities.

The proposals centre on the dual sites of South Quay Plaza and Marsh Wall, with the larger of the skyscrapers to the north part of the site falling just short of the height of One Canada Square. It will step down from 73 storeys to 60, while the southern offering provides 36 storeys dropping to 28 at its lowest.

Ihsan Bashir is manager of South Quay shop Baguette Express. Previously it was a newsagents when the IRA blew it up in 1996 killing his brother. He now fears for the future of his business.

"My primary aim is to still be here," he said. "We are part of history and everyone should know what happened here. By having our shops, everyone will know what the IRA did."

Another Islander told *The Wharf*: "I like high rises, I like the style and they look good, but is this one practical?

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Teenage gymnast Tyesha wins Wharf sports award

Full report from inspiring night
Page 64

What's on

Anna Calvi on performing live, and moving on

Comic Joel Dommett and his pity gigs

Taylor Swift at The O2

NEWS Island rapist jailed for 17 years • Residents in beerfest protest • Crossrail's breakthrough

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Agenda

WEATHER

9C	TODAY	Showers
10C	FRIDAY	Showers
9C	SATURDAY	Showers
9C	SUNDAY	Cloudy
8C	MONDAY	Showers

TRAVEL

TUBE & DLR
DLR is fine. Jubilee line has no service between Finchley Road and Waterloo on Sunday until 9am.
ROADS
No problems.

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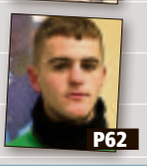

CONTACT US

The Wharf
Trinity Mirror
22nd Floor
One Canada Square
Canary Wharf
LONDON E14 5AP

EDITOR Giles Broadbent
email newsdesk@wharf.co.uk
editorial 020 7510 6306
advertising 020 7510 6055
web wharf.co.uk

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ESTABLISHED 1998

10 years a slave to this strange place

BLONDE'S EYE VIEW

ANGELA **CLARKE**

I'm so organised I keep each of my *Wharf* columns for posterity. However, I'm so disorganised I only file them once a year.

For 11 months and 29 days of the year, my home office is dominated by a teetering totem pole of papers, that threatens to collapse over anyone that strays close. It's a newspaper guard dog warding off visitors, and the Hoover.

I'm fond of my towering health and safety risk. I like to think that one day my body will be discovered lying under a slew of newspapers, entombed forever in my own words and the property pages.

Recently, like an Indiana Jones of office admin, I bravely fought off paper cuts and dug deep into that ink for the great annual file.

And I, a raider of the lost Clarke, unearthed a great discovery. In September 2013 I'd officially been writing for *The Wharf* for 10 years. I'm so organised I know I've been at *The Wharf* for a decade. I'm so disorganised I missed this monumental anniversary by four months.

It would have made a charming column. A commemoration of whinging. A historical record of changes locally, and with my hair. A brilliant birthday blow-out of a piece. If I wasn't a third of a year too late. Technically this is my 10 year and four month Whanniversary. Which reminds me of two dating kids celebrating the random event of their nine-day anniversary, because that feels unbelievably long if you're 11.

The Wharf and I have been "going out" for 3,775 days. Almost a third of my life. My relationship with the paper's lasted longer than any of my boyfriends.

I've spent a decade writing, living, and drinking in Canary Wharf. Ten years a slave. I need to get out more.

Follow Angela on Twitter: @TheAngelaClarke

London eye

REUTERS

Education Secretary Michael Gove speaks about education reform at the London Academy of Excellence in Stratford. More education news on Page 6

A week in London Page 59

60 Second Wharf

Market site reborn
The second phase of the Canning Town Rathbone market development is getting under way.
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Trouble's brewing
As a licence bid goes in for another Millwall Park beer festival, residents are raising concerns.
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Between the lines
Credit Suisse workers say the most rewarding part of their week is when they volunteer in borough schools.
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It's Justin time
Comedian Joel Dommett's claim to fame is that he once did a warm-up show for Justin Bieber.
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Material interests
A new exhibition of textiles shows that Picasso and Chagall weren't just about painting.
What's On • Page 16

Stars of the league
The Wharf League has reached its conclusion so we celebrate the trophy winners and stars.
Sport • Page 62

What our writers are talking about

■ "There is nothing improper about what we do," Cllr Alibor Choudhury said without a hint of irony.
Giles Broadbent

■ I'll use my experience to serve all the people of Tower Hamlets, acting fairly, valuing our diverse community as a strength.
John Biggs

■ My weekend was lost. Me, the minion to Master A's Isambard Kingdom Brunel, sorting out the Lego for the construction project.
Tabitha Ronson

■ This chic, Docklands gastro-pub is all about elegance and tradition, the perfect setting to for a sophisticated February 14.
Beth Allcock

Corrections & Clarifications

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Our journalists adhere to the Editors Code of Practice, which sets the benchmark for high professional standards and is enforced by the Press Complaints Commission. If we do slip up, we promise to set the record straight on this page in a clear, no-nonsense manner.

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Taylor woos O2 with set of sass and sentiment

REVIEW

Beth.Allcock
@wharf.co.uk

I'm beginning to think Taylor Swift is misunderstood.

"You'll be the oldest girls there," laughed my housemate, after my pal and I told her of our trip to The O2.

And yes, although we found ourselves sat in the rafters among pre-teens wrapped up in fairy lights, donning tops splashed with the American's face and glitter glow sticks, this was far from a night dedicated to the kids.

As if to make the point The Script frontman Danny O'Donoghue made a brief appearance for a duet on his track *Break Even*, to the delight of the contingent of females in their 20s and 30s.

But what became crystal clear as the 24-year-old opened up her back-catalogue and her heart to the sell-out crowd was the catchy yet sincere nature of her chart-topping creations.

Anyone who has suffered a failed relationship can chant the lyrics of *We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together* (in what is, admittedly, a fun form of stress relief) or feel a twinge of sentimentality in Taylor's early hit, *Love Story*.

Opening with *Red* album tracks *State Of Grace* followed by *Holy Ground*, the Grammy Award winner was touched at the crowd's reaction.

And throughout her two-hour set – before album headliner *Red*, heartfelt *Ours* and new offering *All Too Well* – she showed sophistication beyond her years, letting the audience into her song-writing secrets, pain and heartbreak behind her tunes.

And she showed she's no one-trick-country-pony, adding sultry '60s sass to *You Belong With Me* and a urban edge to *Love Story*.

"I don't know about you – I'm feeling 22," she sings mid-set.

Us? Yes, we're post-teenagers, but we were jumping and singing our hearts out like the best of them.

Taylor Swift: Red Tour continues at The O2, Feb 10-11, go to theo2.co.uk

★★★★☆

GETTY

Taylor Swift went through her songs – and her wardrobe – during her residency at The O2

NEWS IN BRIEF

Around east London

'Borough market of east' planned

DOCKLANDS Construction will begin in the coming weeks on what is proposed as a "Borough Market for east London".

Cathedral Group and Galliard Homes are behind the scheme for Royal Gateway and Caxton Works which aims to regenerate an area of disused warehouses at Canning Town.

The scheme received planning permission from Newham Council in December last year.

Full story at wharf.co.uk

5 injured in crash with tanker lorry

EAST LONDON A collision between an Audi and a tanker lorry left five people injured on Tuesday morning.

The incident happened at about 3.30am at the A13 on East India Dock Road. All five, aged 18-22, were in the Audi and have been taken to hospital. Police said two of the patients are in a serious condition and one is in a life threatening condition.

The incident saw the A13 closed at the junction of Leamouth Road for most of the morning.

Rapist blackmailed victim to keep quiet

COURT

Man threatened to upload attack footage to web

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

A rapist who used emotional blackmail and threats to carry out a campaign of abuse on his victim has been jailed for 17 years.

Mohammed Fakhrul Islam, 33, of Stewart Street, on the Isle of Dogs, recorded his sex attack on his 18-year-old "friend" before threatening to show her family and post it on the internet.

He was sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court for three rapes, one assault and one charge of voyeurism after he was found guilty in December.

Islam had met the victim in Bangladesh in 2008 and become friends. Two years later, after the teenager had moved to the UK to study, she got back in touch with Islam.

Mohammed Fakhrul Islam: Jailed for 17 years

Later that year he took her to a friend's house, where she was dragged into a bedroom and raped by Islam, who recorded the attack on his mobile phone.

He then threatened to tell her family they were having sex unless she did what he wanted.

He also said he would post the footage on the internet along with her phone number, implying she was a prostitute. Islam also threatened to kill her if she went out with another man.

Soon after, he raped her for a second time and recorded that attack as well.

By February 2013, the victim was suffering depression and it was around this time the third rape took place.

When Islam waited for her outside work, the victim confided in a colleague that she feared him. They both went out together but Islam attacked them both when she wouldn't leave with him.

The colleague convinced her to go to the police and, on March 5 last year Islam was arrested.

Det Con Caroline Horden from the Sexual Offences, Exploitation and Child Abuse Command, said: "The victim has shown great strength of character.

"She found the courage to come forward and speak about her terrible ordeal and because of this a very dangerous individual has been brought to justice."

The victim has since been rehoused.

BARCLAYS WORKER IN COURT • PAGE 7

News

Tunnel links north and south of city

TRANSPORT

A TUNNEL between North Woolwich and Plumstead is now finished as Crossrail continues work towards its 2018 launch.

It is the first link Crossrail has built beneath the Thames. Work began in August and finished at North Woolwich last week.

The link between Newham and Greenwich boroughs is one of a number of recent milestones.

At Whitechapel, tunnel machine Elizabeth made a spectacular entrance at Whitechapel as she passed through on her way from Limmo Peninsula in Newham to Farringdon.

And, in Stepney Green, Jessica completed her journey from Pudding Mill Lane.

Crossrail chief executive Andrew Wolstenholme said: "The end is now in sight for Crossrail tunnelling with over 70 per cent of the new rail tunnels now constructed."

A tunnel beneath the Thames now links Plumstead and North Woolwich

Next phase of market scheme gets under way

REGENERATION

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

CANNING Town regeneration continues with the second phase of the Rathbone Market scheme now under construction.

Demolition is over and building work on the 165 new homes has begun.

It's part of the £180million venture by Legal and General Property, Muse Developments and the Homes and Communities Agency.

In total, phase two will see 123 homes available on the open market and 42 for shared ownership.

Called Aurelia, it includes shops, a community building and two public squares, one of which will house the new Rathbone Market.

The homes will be on sale from later this month. The previous phase, Vermillion, saw all 271 apartments sold in under a year.

Cllr Conor McAuley, Newham Council's executive member for regeneration and strategic planning, said: "The transformation of Canning Town is clear to anyone visiting the area with the Rathbone Market development visible across Newham.

"The success of Vermilion has demonstrated exactly what the public and private sector can achieve when working together."

Completion of Aurelia is scheduled to take place towards the end of this year and continuing into 2015.

In total, the regeneration will see an estimated £3.7billion invested in Canning Town and Custom House over 10 years.

Duncan Cumberland, development director for English Cities Fund, the body behind the joint venture, said: "Together, we're creating an attractive and vibrant new town centre which will improve life for those who live here and boost the economy by drawing in newcomers."

Artist's impression of the scheme

A 'marker building'

An early artist's interpretation created to give a rough indication of the scale of the development

FOSTER & PARTNERS

From Page One

"I'm not against the design but it's how they can make it work. The development is massive, it really is.

"The Island is going to be over-populated before long. The transport won't be able to hold it, the DLR is full to capacity and there aren't enough buses."

Julian Carter, director of GVA property consultants, said a planning application would be submitted within the next two months.

Patrick Campbell, of development partner Fosters and Architects, said: "We feel this site offers something that isn't currently on the Isle of Dogs – a marker building of high quality in terms of the development, in terms of how it's going to be delivered, and the thought that has gone into it.

"It is being driven by creating a place. This will be a destination, this is something that will be memorable and have a character of its own."

Residents raised issues over the ability of South Quay DLR station to handle an increase in traffic.

David Ellis, of WSP group, said based on figures from the 2011 census the development would generate an extra 10 to 15 passengers per train.

The scheme will also feature a waterfront zone, public spaces and shops. Another footbridge to Canary Wharf was raised as a possibility.

A final public exhibition will be held on February 14-15 at the Lantern Theatre Studios, Millharbour.

Plans for ski centre remain on ice

REGENERATION

ANYONE inspired by the Winter Olympics, starting tomorrow (Friday), will to have to wait a bit longer for an update on the planned ski centre in east London.

The ambitious £200million development by Westfield was announced last July, with concrete plans due to be submitted to the London Legacy Development Company at the end of last summer. However, nothing has yet been released to the public and it was not included on the LLDC agenda for the meeting at the end of January.

Westfield, however, said it was still working on the proposal, which is due to be up and running in 2015.

The scheme proposes a 300m run, twice as long as the current biggest in the UK, and the covered centre should include real snow.

Speaking about the centre last summer, Mayor Boris Johnson said: "Stratford's status as a stunning new destination is confirmed by Westfield's plans for a world-class indoor ski centre.

"This underscores the massive confidence in this area from investors, which is delivering a real pay back for taxpayers in terms of jobs and the regeneration of east London."

Beer festival ruined park, say residents

EVENTS

As council considers new bid, neighbours demand guarantees

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

Beer is to blame for water-logged sports pitches on the Isle of Dogs, it's been claimed. A German-themed festival, which took place last year and wants to return in 2014, is accused of causing drainage problems, leading to the cancellation of a host of sporting fixtures.

Tower Hamlets licensing committee is due to rule in the coming weeks on whether the Oktoberfest event can return to Millwall Park.

But residents complain last year's event has turned the site into a bog and have also cited problems over security. Glen McCarty, of East Ferry Road, which backs on to the park, has launched a website in opposition to the plans. He said he wasn't against Oktoberfest in principle but the damage caused meant he wanted more assurances from organisers.

Glen McCarty: Reassurance sought

"Last year they made promises about clearing up any vandalism and putting on security," said Mr McCarty.

"What we were left with was drainage problems caused by steel erections that have made the park a muddy bog."

Millwall Park has become a bog with sporting fixtures now called off

He said security was inadequate, which meant police and council officials had to pick up the slack.

He said: "Now the event is going to be bigger so the problems will be worse."

The council has asked for comments to be considered at February 18's meeting.

Mr McCarty said: "If [the organisers] can leave guarantees with a bond looked after by the council then perhaps the objections will melt away.

"It's not a cultural festival, it's beer drinking and when you get hundreds of people drinking strong beer there are problems that need to be dealt with."

Millwall Rugby Club is one of those groups affected by the pitch problems. This weekend all of its games were called off due to the state of the pitch. Experts from the Rugby Football Union visited last week and said the top of the pitch would have to be re-laid.

Millwall director Graham Hargreaves said: "We're not against beer festivals – we go as a club to one every year – but last year the tent spikes went through the drainage systems and the rain has caused major issues."

In response, Carsten Raun, director of London Oktoberfest Ltd, said: "Last year went well and we had a wonderful event. However, the first year is always a learning year and now we want to talk to the locals and make the necessary adjustments."

Mr Raun denied the tents had damaged the drainage system as they were based off of the pitches. He said the bond he submitted was refunded as the council said there was no damage.

Go to millwallpark.org/Millwall Park/ What can I do.html.

NEWS IN BRIEF
Around Canary Wharf

Moleskine moves to Cabot Place

CANARY WHARF The Italian notebook maker Moleskine has picked Canary Wharf, along with Covent Garden, for its first standalone stores in the UK. It is due to open next month.

Hoardings have signalled the shop will take up the location recently vacated by The White Company in Cabot Place.

Moleskine, which completed a £244million stock exchange flotation in Milan, has branched out into luxury branded goods.

Tube strike latest
Go to wharf.co.uk

Call for witnesses to JP Morgan fall

CANARY WHARF Witnesses to the death of JP Morgan worker Gabriel Magee are being asked to contact the police.

Gabriel, 39, died after falling from the roof of the office block at 25 Bank Street last Tuesday at 8am.

Police say they are not treating the incident as suspicious but they are collecting information for Poplar Coroner's office.

Call 101 quoting reference 14FOU000878.

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Education

Professionals explain their career choices

Volunteer police cadets explain why they put on the uniform

WORK

SNAPSHOTS of the world of work were brought into the classroom at George Green's School this week.

The Isle of Dogs secondary hosted its third consecutive Bring Your Job To School Day with professionals sharing their expertise and top tips with pupils in Years Nine to 11.

Careers including those in health, education, retail, hair and beauty, uniformed services and the media were put under the spotlight as the teenagers grilled representatives.

Sessions were also held outside the school gates, with Tower Hamlets College, Canary Wharf-based Clifford Chance and Osborne Clark taking part.

Student Danniela Murphy said: "It's been great to have a chance to ask lots of questions and speak to people about the choices they made."

Marcus Cattell, representing England Rugby, said: "I think it's very worthwhile.

"The kids had lots of questions to ask and they seemed very interested, not just in rugby but in the world of work."

Beth Allcock

It's the most rewarding bit of my week

PARTNERSHIPS

Wharfers giving children benefit of their attention

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

Each week thousands of business people leave the comfort of their offices and head to a less polished part of Tower Hamlets.

They are returning to the classroom to help give youngsters a boost in their education through one of many partner programmes.

The initiative is orchestrated by the charity Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership and has been running quietly and successfully for 20 years. It now has more than 3,000 volunteers from Canary Wharf and the City.

Helen Sanson, director at the charity, says it's a massive help for the children.

"One or two children are matched with a business volunteer who coaches them on mental maths, for example, or number games, usually during lunchtime," said Helen.

"Sometimes the children are shy and need to build confidence or they don't have many adult role models in their lives.

"They may be falling behind in their studies and need a push, or perhaps they are doing well and need to be tested."

But it's not just the children that benefit. The nine-to-fiver also gains, even if it's just a break from the working day.

"It's a chance to get out of the office and link up with the community," said Helen.

"It also helps you cope with work stresses as your focussing your attention on a child instead.

"A lot of people say it's the highlight of their week, especially when they see children become more confident. Volunteers return year after year."

Mark Gardaner, of Credit Suisse, said: "Actually to go and visit the children in class and help make a small difference to their education is really rewarding.

"I enjoy being involved with the school – the teachers and staff are very supportive of the scheme."

Those workers often approach the charity direct, while companies allow representatives of THEBP to come in and showcase their ideas.

Now 68 of the 70 primary schools in the borough as well as all secondary schools in Tower Hamlets participate.

Credit Suisse staff, above and below, help out in the classroom

The big focus for this year is on teaching financial literacy, which comes into the national curriculum in September, and the charity is looking for people to teach maths.

"Companies say even graduates' numeracy skills are not up to scratch," said Helen. "We need to confront that at a young age."

Go to thebp.org.

Only online

Gove comes to Stratford to outline his vision

wharf.co.uk

How we transformed the capital's schools

wharf.co.uk

Parents share their new skill

DISPLAY

IF you happen to encounter a pack of dinosaurs on your way to the office this month, don't be alarmed.

It's all part of a joint Learn Some Teach Some scheme by Cubitt Town Infant and Junior Schools now being showcased in the Community Window Gallery in Jubilee Place.

For this art-based project, parents received expert tutoring from a silk painting expert, then work with teachers to help youngsters make their own banners.

Infants created dinosaur designs while their older schoolmates focussed on the theme of the four seasons.

Jacqui Jenkins, parent liaison co-ordinator, said: "We hope that the passers-by in Canary Wharf enjoy our work as much as everyone has enjoyed this project."

GETTY

JOEY'S GANG

Clowns dressed in full costume attend a service in memory of celebrated clown Joseph Grimaldi at the "clowns' church" – Holy Trinity in Dalston on Sunday. The original "Clown Joey" died in 1837 and this was the 68th gathering.

Woman faces death plot charge after terror raid

EAST LONDON A Stratford woman has appeared in court charged with the attempted murder of her mother.

Kuntal Patel, who works at Barclays Bank in Canary Wharf, was arrested on Sunday under anti-terror laws by police looking for toxic chemicals.

She appeared at Westminster Magistrates Court on Thursday. The daughter, who was refused bail and will next appear at the Old Bailey on February 21, lives with her mother and sister in Stratford.

The 36-year-old is accused of the plot to kill Meena Patel, 54, who is a magistrate at the Thames Magistrates Court. Patel will appear again on February 21.

Police seek witnesses to help explain canal death

EAST LONDON Police are appealing for information over the death of a 36-year-old woman after she fell into a canal yards away from the Olympic Park.

Emergency services were called to the City Mill River, near to Marshgate Lane in Stratford, just before 7am on Sunday, January 19.

The woman was rescued from the water but died later at an east London hospital.

The woman is described as white, 5ft 5ins tall with dark brown shoulder length curly hair. She was wearing a pink cardigan, dark trousers and black shoes when she fell into the water.

Police are not treating the incident as suspicious but are asking witnesses to call PC Benge On 101 quoting reference 2336/19.

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BUSINESS IS GREAT BRITAIN

Notebook

Brick on brick – and I nearly built myself an asylum

When I walked into the office on Monday morning, I was dreading the usual "Have a nice weekend? Do anything exciting?" round of questions.

Annoying Colleague was wittering on about her long weekend to Paris. Of course, no Travelodge for her. She'd booked this "delightful design apart" through Airbnb in the "funky Latin Quarter". The host, Jean-Gabriel, was "a treasure" – "Did I tell you he's a film-maker?". And so it went on. And on.

I suppose I should have been grateful as the more she wittered, the less time there was to ask me what I had done.

Master A has been hankering after the Lego Batman Arkham Asylum Breakout set for months. Father Christmas didn't bring it and I never bought it for his birthday, refusing to pay the hefty price tag for the little bricks of plastic.

Plus, I'm not entirely comfortable with my six-year-old playing with a lunatic asylum, complete with miniature syringes, escape rope made from knotted bed sheets and straitjacket cage a la Hannibal Lecter. If he wanted it, he would have to save for it – all 139,000 pennies. Like that was going to happen...

WORKING MUM

TABITHA RONSON

The box arrived direct from Lego on Saturday morning.

My weekend was lost in translation. Me, the minion to Master A's Isambard Kingdom Brunel, sorting out the pieces for each step of the major construction project.

Saturday came and went in a grey brick haze, with Master A piecing together the entrance gate, Meat Wagon, two rooms of the asylum, along with The Joker, The Scarecrow, Robin, Poison Ivy, Harley Quinn, The Scarecrow and Master A's hero Batman.

Sunday was more of the same. The entire day spent in the final phase of the asylum construction.

When that last brick clipped in both Master A and I were euphoric – my son because of the "super cool" structure; me because after two days of digging through little Lego bricks and pieces, I probably need to be admitted to a large-scale version of it.

Working Mum, dreading to know what Master A wants to save up for next.

Data blog

Trends, stats & surveys

11.2%

Average house price increase in London over 2013 leaving the average price at £403,792. Rises also showed Tower Hamlets 9.2%, Greenwich 8.2% and Newham 3.8%.

33%

Percentage of West Ham's official "home-grown" players who are "non-English". The five non-English home-grown players is the joint highest in the Premier League.

8.7%

Percentage of population of Newham that is not proficient in English, the highest in the country. Tower Hamlets is second equal with Brent on 8%.

Sources: Land Registry: Trinity Mirror Data Unit; Office Of National Statistics

Catch up with our latest interactive Data blog graphics on wharf.co.uk every week

The undignified silence

Tower Hamlets resident is branded a pervert in the council chamber for seeking the truth

Canvassers are patrolling the streets of Wapping

SPIRAL NOTEBOOK

By Giles Broadbent

In December, I made the Mayor's Office very angry. One of the disciples was quickly on the case, shouting a lot and accusing me of all sorts of devilry before slamming down the phone.

My crime? I had reported that an inquiry would investigate claims that cold callers in Wapping, who were presenting themselves as from Tower Hamlets Homes, were actually peddling the mayor.

Resident Mark Baynes, who writes the LoveWapping blog, reported this greeting from the mystery ladies at his door: "Hello, we are from Tower Hamlets Homes and we are wondering how the mayor can help you on the estate?"

The mayor was outraged. Never mind that I made no assertion as to his knowledge or involvement, it was sufficient that I had dared to publish that councillors were even questioning his conduct.

My insolence provoked him to find the full measure of his wrath.

"The allegations that bogus representatives from the social housing company were using their access to residents in Wapping to 'flog [my] re-election bid' are completely untrue," he wrote in his right of reply.

"I had come to expect a whole lot better from your newspaper."

Last week I asked the council where they had got with the inquiry and a spokesman said two separate inquiries had concluded the callers were neither from the council nor Tower Hamlets Homes.

So who were they then? Well, Mayor Rahman's people could have saved everyone the bother – and expense? – of investigating.

For his rambunctious mouthpiece Cllr Alibor Choudhury has now revealed that the mystery ladies weren't mystery ladies at all but, er, Rahman canvassers.

He still denied as "baseless" claims that they had presented themselves as from the social housing firm but he conceded at a council meeting: "These are volunteers we use."

Presumably the mayor thought it best not to clutter his right of reply with such frothy distractions.

Was Cllr Choudhury abashed over this admission? Did he say, "Soz, guys, we could have untangled this mess way back by being more – what is the mayor's election buzzword? – *transparent*."

Nope. He went on the attack. Apparently, the volunteers who had appeared unbidden at his door subsequently (and conveniently) denounced Mark as a "pervert" and a "voyeur" and his quest to discover their identities "intimidating" – slurs Charmer Choudhury was happy to repeat in the council chamber.

"There is nothing improper about what we do," Cllr Choudhury said without a hint of irony.

So, if "ladies" do come to your door and they seem nice and want to mend your street lamps and decorate your hallway with glossy Rahman pamphlets, first seek reassurance that, should the visit go awry, you won't be denounced, ridiculed and insulted by their colleagues in the vilest possible way and in a very public forum.

Stay classy, Tower Hamlets.

Follow Giles Broadbent on Twitter: @MediaGulch

High Five Laptops

Microsoft Surface Pro 2 (128GB) £715 This combo device actually manages to meld laptop and tablet without failing at both.

Samsung ATIV Book 9, £579.95 Thin and lightweight, this Windows 8 device has a touchscreen and a decent length of battery life.

Sony Vaio Multi-flip, £709 A perfectly engineered motion will take this from slick looking laptop to touchscreen tablet.

HP Chromebook 11, £249.99 This budget-end notebook has lowly internal memory of just 16GB but accesses cloud memory as a boost.

Apple MacBook Pro With Retina 15in, £1,699 The one to beat with a stunning display, 256GB of storage and 8GB of RAM.

POLITICAL VIEWPOINT

By John Biggs

A vital year to make choices on our future

This is a vital year for Tower Hamlets. Many of us think the current mayor is letting our community down. We could do so much better.

The mayor of Tower Hamlets controls a £1billion annual budget but he's failing on the basics. Rubbish goes uncollected and crime has risen in our borough, despite decreasing in Newham and Hackney.

He's wasted golden opportunities like the Olympics. We were right at the centre of it, yet Tower Hamlets didn't get anything – no Olympic events, no lasting jobs and no homes.

As a candidate who is strong, honest and fair I know what is needed and can be trusted to get it done.

> "I'll serve all the people, valuing our diverse community

With over 25 years' experience of public service, I helped bring the Olympics to east London, worked on housing and job creation projects and have successfully brought transport improvements to the East End.

I'll use this experience to serve all the people of Tower Hamlets, acting fairly, valuing our diverse community as a strength.

This means working in partnership to improve the success rate of people seeking employment or setting up their own businesses, cracking down on crime and antisocial behaviour, tackling the housing crisis and prioritising school places, so parents won't have to travel across the borough to take their child to school.

Tower Hamlets needs the strong leadership I can provide that puts fairness and opportunity first and takes the East End forward.

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News

Singing is exhausting but not draining

INTERVIEW **Andy Welch** talks to Anna Calvi about performing and perfectionism

Anna Calvi: You have to let go

YOU won't read a review of Anna Calvi's operatic albums or live shows that doesn't feature the words "brooding" or "dramatic", while on stage, she cuts an almost androgynous figure.

It's utterly captivating, watching her perform, and exhausting for her, although don't expect her to change that when she comes to The Troxy, Limehouse, on Saturday (February 8).

"I don't get tired from it," she said. "I mean, it is tiring, but it's a replenishing feeling and it feels good to be able to express myself in that way. It's not like when you've had an argument with someone. Good draining not bad draining."

If she's intense on stage, she's not much less formidable when speaking.

The 33-year-old Londoner talks in short sentences, concise and never prone to making conversation if it can be avoided.

Calvi's second album, *One Breath*, came out in October last year, a fiery affair, a whirling, Gothic drama that sees her as some sort of Telecaster-wielding femme fatale.

Now she has two albums' worth of songs to play, Calvi says she's really looking forward to her live dates.

"Playing live is my favourite part of everything I do," she said. "The performance is just for that moment and then it disappears, so you feel less..." she trailed off. "As a perfectionist, it's nice to know whatever you've done just disappears.

"I enjoy the way my songs develop the more I play them. They change from how they were when I recorded them, but that doesn't mean I want to go back and change the albums. Once you make a record you have to let go, that's important.

"I don't think about how things are going," she added, finally.

"It's not that helpful. I think about a performance, or how well I sang, or the last song I wrote and how happy I am with it, but the rest of it comes and goes and you have no control over it," she said.

"The only thing you can control is how much work you put in."

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I want to run boot camps for the heart

VALENTINE'S Counsellor sets up sessions to tackle singleton woes, writes **Beth Allcock**

"I'm not teaching the best chat up lines, I am helping people prepare for the rest of their lives," says Owen Redahan, discussing the launch of a series of workshops to help singleton Wharfers find "the one".

"It's for men, women, gay, straight, those aged 22 or 42 – we all have the same challenges and we all learn from the experience of relationships."

The counsellor will open up his base in West India Quay's Cannon Workshops to just four participants as part of an intensive programme tackling issues of the heart.

Sessions will explore the meaning of relationships, their differing forms, personal strengths and weaknesses and physical versus emotional intimacy.

Although set against a New Year backdrop which traditionally sees divorce and separation rates peak across the country, Owen said it was issues a little closer to the Wharf that sparked his new concept.

"Wharfers are known by their success. It's long days in a pressured situation and this means they have less time for their personal lives.

"If they have the time, perhaps they don't use it in the way they want to and if they want a relationship and don't have one, because of the focus on success not having a relationship is seen as failure.

"That leads to questions of self-esteem."

He said clients had faced niggling issues – questioning why they were struggling to find a partner? If there was anyone for them or whether there was something wrong with them?

"It's finding out about themselves. Asking 'What am I really looking for, why do I want that, what does a relationship mean to me and what might it mean to the person I am dating?'.

"Having four people will bring a wonderful dynamic and someone else can say 'you might have done that, but I have done this'.

"What's within the four walls of the workshop stays within the four walls, so people can feel free to explore themselves."

And while Wharfers enrolling on the scheme won't add to their repertoire of date night hook up lines, they might equip themselves with the tools to find a partner and relationship which work.

"Hopefully it will be enjoyable," added Owen. "Sometimes you get bogged down thinking always of the negatives and this is a kick up the backside to make you realise, yes you can."

Go to owen-redahan.co.uk.

KAY LOCKETT

Counsellor Owen Redahan wants to put romance to the fore

OFFER

- Owen is offering a half-price class fee – bringing the cost down to £70 – for the first and fifth people to book.
- The first workshop starts on Tuesday (February 11) and will then run every Tuesday from 12.30pm to 1.45pm in Owen's office in Room 67, Cannon Workshops.
- The four sessions normally cost £140 in total.

VALENTINE'S FOCUS • FROM P49

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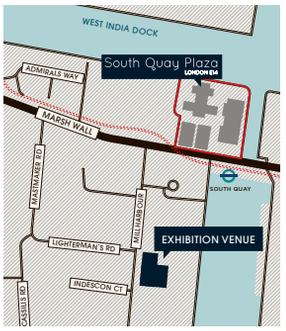

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What's On

Seven Days

Stage

War Horse team tackle comedy

★The staging of **A Midsummer Night's Dream** at The Barbican is the first collaboration between Handspring Puppet Theatre and director Tom Morris since *War Horse*.

A shape-shifting Puck is conjured from a selection of workman's tools. An eight-foot-tall Titania presides over a troupe of fairies while a giant Oberon meddles in the confusion of squabbling lovers.

Until Feb 15, Barbican Theatre, £16-£35, barbican.org.uk/theatre.

Stage

The tragic poetry of the Great War

★The season of presentations geared to the 100th anniversary of the First World War sees Ophelia Theatre offer **Between The Lines**.

Written and performed by Simon de Deney, it explores a mystery in a war cemetery and features the poems of Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon.

Feb 11-March 2, Ophelia Dalston, £10, lift574dalston@gmail.com.

Dance

Ritual dance of love and laughter

★Dance theatre spectacular **Love&Sex** has been "created to entertain and inform without judgment" and explores the pressures and comedy of sex.

State Of Emergency is behind the performance, which they have been taking across the country over recent weeks. The creative team includes Grammy-nominated composer Steve Marshall.

Feb 13, Canada Water Culture Space, £8-10, canadawater culturespace.org.uk.

Mortgages, meltdowns and how I landed my pity gigs

INTERVIEW I can see why Justin Bieber has gone crazy, Joel Dommett tells **Rob Virtue**

Comedian Joel Dommett is an MTV presenter who has also starred in BBC3's *Impractical Jokers* and teen drama *Skins*. He'll be coming to Canary Wharf's East Wintergarden for a comedy spectacular on February 18. He tells us what sent Justin Bieber crazy and why he turned down an HSBC mortgage (Joel not Justin).

■ **Hi Joel. Looking forward to coming to Canary Wharf?**

I am. I've been over that way a few times and Greenwich, because Up The Creek is one of my favourite clubs to perform in. But comedy doesn't normally happen in Canary Wharf.

The last time I did a gig there was for a full HSBC party and at the time I was just looking to get a mortgage for a house and I was trying to get some advice really. They told me I was unlikely to get a mortgage but in the end I got one so the joke's on them. I got it with NatWest!

I tend to just pick up general banking advice in Canary Wharf.

■ **What material will you be using?**

Some stuff from my new show that I really think is my best stuff. I'll be on for about half an hour I guess and if I'm enjoying myself I'll do new fun material but if not then I'll bring out the old stuff. They usually both get laughs.

■ **You're known for finishing sets with nunchucks. Should we be prepared for this in Canary Wharf?**

Well if I did that at every gig no-one would come to see me. It takes so much effort, with the lighting and sound, I wouldn't want to burden Canary Wharf with such madness. So you're safe.

■ **Just to check how accurate Wikipedia is here are some facts... You were born in 1988?**

No, 1985. Why would somebody make that up?

■ **At least people think you're younger than you are. It does say "circa" so it's an estimate.**

Is that what circa means? Fantastic. I'm going to use that all the time now. Meet you tomorrow. Circa 2.30.

■ **And your first gig was in Los Angeles?**

That's true. About seven years ago, I was travelling over there and for a month I used to go to these comedy clubs. In the end they let me in for free. They must have felt sorry for me, turning up every night.

So I thought I might as well try it and ended up coming home and doing it for real. Slowly it took over my life and the rest of my life gradually fell apart.

■ **You also did a warm-up show for Justin Bieber?**

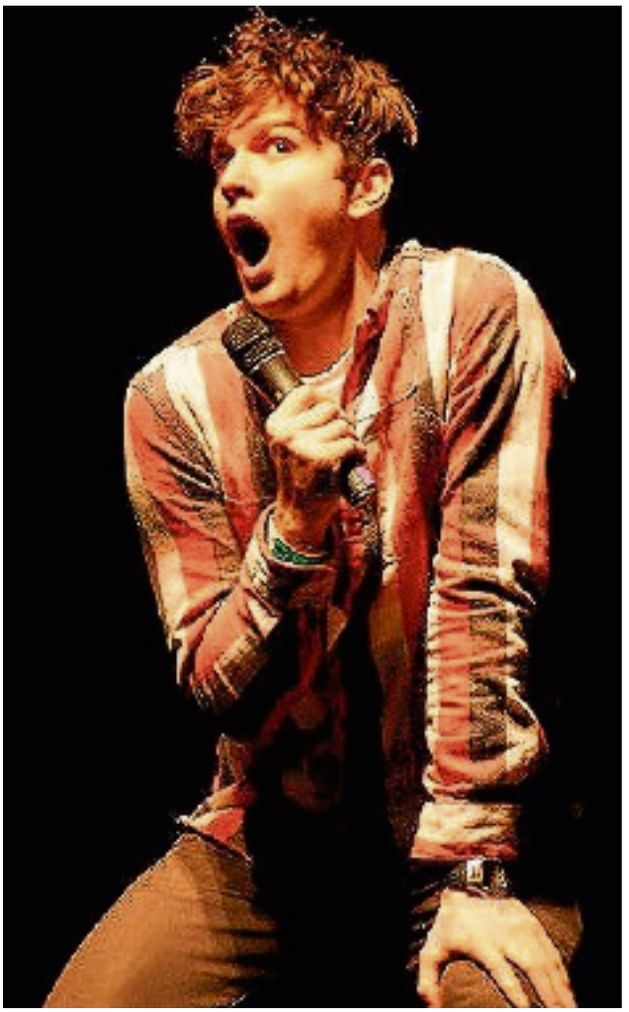
Yes I did. A couple of years ago. I only did 10 minutes but it was mad. I was in the presence of the King of Pop. And the King of DUIs.

■ **Did you see any signs of impending meltdown?**

I didn't see any but the fact there were 10,000 people screaming his name gave an insight into how things could go wrong.

If I opened the window and 10,000 people screamed my name I think I would be a right dickhead. But they won't so I guess I'm OK.

■ *Canary Wharf Comedy Club also features Zoe Lyons, Nathan Caton, Carl Donnelly and Phil Nichol on February 18 at East Wintergarden. For tickets costing £12 go to seetickets.com.*



Joel Dommett stars in TV's *Impractical Jokers* and *Skins*

Justin Bieber: Off the rails

Zoe Lyons and Phil Nichol

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What's On

A rich harvest grows from fruits of Kate's natural talent

EXHIBITION
Kate Malone
One Canada Square

IF YOU'RE a regular in the lobby at One Canada Square you'll have noticed an array of spectacular pots.

It's the skyscraper's first exhibition in its Sculpture At Work programme in 2014 and features highly-acclaimed ceramicist Kate Malone.

Her work is described as "always surprising" and sees her transform natural objects such as pumpkins, pineapples and seeds into beautiful works of art.

Her approach links back to the history of British pottery, particularly at the hotbed of the industry in Stoke on Trent.

Ann Elliott, exhibition curator at Canary Wharf, said: "Malone enjoys working on a large scale, which she can manage well in her own studio, and has created pieces up to one metre high.

"These are balanced by smaller studio pieces following like themes.

Kate Malone with some of works yet to be completed

"All her ceramics glow with inner light due to the thick, translucent and transparent glazes she uses over white clay.

"The works are extravagant, generous, ebullient and joyous."

The exhibition has been organised with the help of Malone's London dealer, Adrian Sassoon.

Further exhibitions are to be announced over the course of the year. 2013 saw work from the likes of Halima Cassell, Nick Hornby, Ellis O'Connell and Sinta Tantra, together with significant bronze sculptures from the celebrated Ingram Collection of Modern British Art.

Rob Virtue

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What's On

MUSIC

Tales From The Realm...
Suzanne Vega
★★★★☆

While she may lack the stellar sales she did during her heyday back in the '80s and early '90s, *Tales From The Realm Of The Queen Of Pentacles* is certainly Vega's strongest set of songs for years.

The 54-year-old has also transformed herself from a whimsical, folky singer-songwriter to incorporate an electric guitar-driven sound, giving her songs a vibrant new setting. It's a welcome return to top form. KM

DVD

Prisoners
(15) 153mins
★★★★☆

Hugh Jackman is mesmerising as the dad who loses his moral compass and takes the law into his own hands when his daughter goes missing.

Jake Gyllenhaal plays the low-key detective whose laidback approach belies a rebellious and steely core.

And Paul Dano is creepy and sympathetic as the prime suspect.

As with *Gone Baby Gone*, this lengthy, complex and gripping thriller shows how communities and families fall apart in the shadow of a foul crime. GB

BOOK

The Sting Man
Robert W Greene
★★★★☆

This extraordinary 1981 tale of two-bit Bronx conman Mel Weinberg, who went into business with the FBI and nearly toppled a government is the basis of Oscar tipped film *American Hustle*, hence the re-issue.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Robert W Greene tells the story of the mobster in forensic, almost banal, detail yet still manages to convey the romance of his scrapes. GB

Full review at wharf.co.uk

Past masters share material concerns

EXHIBITION

Artists like Picasso saw no distinction between art and its practical application

Beth.Allcock
@wharf.co.uk

Right, that's it. I'm equipped with an empty suitcase and a notepad and on a quest to find a Time Machine to take me back to the '50s to create my very own Picasso print dress.

Yes you did read that correctly – a Picasso dress. Not a *Weeping Woman* or an *Old Guitarist* but a fish-print fabric with which to stun my friends.

While I'm at it, I may as well crank back a few more years to 1947 and don a Dali garment while picking up a striking blue-and-white silk square design by Matisse.

Until now, I've been quite content as a 20-something in the 21st century, heading to galleries at home and abroad to admire the framed artwork of the famous names in the Surrealist, Pop Art, Cubist and Fauvist genres.

But *Artist Textiles Picasso to Warhol* – the latest exhibition at Newham College's Fashion and Textile Museum – opened my eyes to a different spectrum of spellbinding, colour-popping art from the modern masters.

Running until May 17, it showcases about 200 textile designs, beginning with the 1910 works of the Bloomsbury Omega Workshops artists who strived to change what they called "the erroneous distinction between fine and applied art".

Curators Geoff Rayner and Richard Chamberlain said: "This exhibition allows a remarkable glimpse of how ordinary people were once able to engage in a personal and intimate way with high modern art.

"This was through their everyday clothing and the furnishings of their homes."

And walking through the museum with the pair – whether it be at the start of the era and admiring Raoul Dufy's racecourse prints designed for Paul Poiret's evening coats or the later, varying commissions for Ascher London and New York rival, Wesley Simpson – one point is colourfully hammered home.

Marc Chagall's Belle Fleurs furnishing fabric for Fuller Fabrics, 1956

Textile designs by Salvador Dali, left and above, and Henry Matisse

Picasso's fish print, 1955, on Claire McCarell-designed dress

"These people, they all saw textile design as an art form," said Geoffrey.

"Ruth Reeves, the first established textile designer in the States, thought fabric design should be as regarded as art on the walls – there should be no distinction."

And for me, this was what made the showcase truly engaging from start to finish – along with its US and British historical context. (Britain embraced the textile industry as an engine of post-war recovery.)

I was equally mesmerised by the spiralling ballerina's in Dali's beautiful screen print silk as I was by his surrealist paintings and as intrigued by the detailing on Picasso's Toros Y Toreros fabric as the hours I've spent deciphering Cubism.

And the creations of artists Patrick Heron, Rockwell Kent and John Hull – all of whom are new to me – were enchanting.

It's the kind of exhibition you'd visit again and again, taking something new from the art each time around.

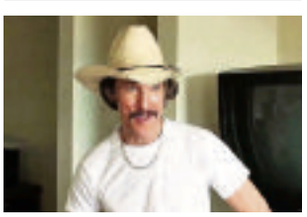
And the best thing about my Tardis adventure? I know, when I finally arrive at Picasso's, working alongside Dan Fuller, president of Fuller Fabrics, I'll be able to afford his designs.

The Spanish artist only agreed to translating his work into fabric form if it was made available to the masses, explained Geoffrey.

And, priced at three to five dollars a yard, I'm ready to snap up a hefty haul.

■ *Until May 17, Tues-Sat, The Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, SE1 3XF, £8.80 (£6.60), ftmlondon.org.*

SCREEN
The Dallas Buyers Club
(15) 117mins



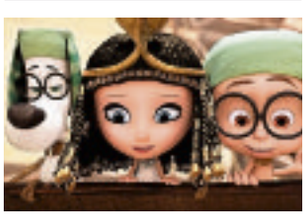
Nominated for six Academy Awards including Best Picture, *The Dallas Buyers Club* is a profoundly moving biopic of a hard-drinking Texan electrician, who refused to accept that his HIV-positive diagnosis in the mid '80s was a death sentence.

Instead, Ron Woodroof (a remarkably transformed Matthew McConaughey) smuggled a cocktail of unapproved drugs into America.

Woodroof is portrayed as a morally compromised character but that simply adds to his frail humanity.

★★★★☆

SCREEN
Mr Peabody & Sherman
(U) 92mins



Mr Peabody & Sherman harnesses the latest digital trickery to propel the hyper-intelligent canine protagonist and his adopted son on a rip-roaring adventure.

As a potted history lesson, the film shoehorns facts and figures between breathlessly orchestrated action set-pieces and slapstick humour.

Famous figures including Leonardo da Vinci (Stanley Tucci), Mona Lisa (Lake Bell) and Agamenon (Patrick Warburton) litter the haphazard narrative.

★★★★☆

SCREEN
Robocop
(12A) 118mins

Jose Padilha directs this glossy remake of Paul Verhoeven's 1987 sci-fi thriller about a futuristic society that meddles with technology and pays a hefty price for its transgressions.

Detroit police officer Alex Murphy (Joel Kinnaman) is gravely injured and the scientists at conglomerate OmniCorp save his life by transforming Alex into a crime-fighting cyborg.

But the company had not reckoned that humanity would burn bright beneath the metallic shell.

★★★☆☆

Valentine's

Pub calls in TV pastry whizz to sweeten its dessert offer

SWEET TREAT

Impress your loved one with desserts from the Bake-Off winner's stable

What more could you want from your Valentine's Day supper than a truly romantic three-course meal and a spectacular view of the Thames?

Perhaps the creative talent of the BBC's *Great British Bake Off 2012* winner, John Whaite, who has whipped up a trio of indulgent desserts to be served up exclusively at The Cutty Sark Pub in Greenwich?

Rounding off a Prosecco welcome drink, starter and main courses, his passion fruit meringue tartlet, salted pretzel candy bar and the rather more mysterious Love Potion Number 9 have been designed with seduction in mind.

The menu, complete with a signed copy of *John Whaite Bakes: Recipes For Every Day And Every Mood*, is priced at £55 per person. Here John talks about what he's planned.

■ **Did you enjoy putting together a Valentine's dessert menu?**

I found it so much fun. It wasn't easy – when doing an array or platter of desserts, each has to complement the others in terms of size, shape and, of course, taste.

■ **Did living in Greenwich make the experience more enjoyable?**

The Cutty Sark is my favourite pub in the world – that isn't an exaggeration – it's cosy, it's on the river, it serves local brew, and so I was so pleased to work alongside the gang there. It's my local, and so I'm glad to be working local.

■ **What are your dishes and what inspired them?**

The first dish I knew I wanted to include was my passion fruit meringue pie.

Greenwich resident and pastry chef John Whaite has been working with the Cutty Sark pub

Everyone seems to go mad for it because of the sharp, tropical curd topped with slightly burnished Italian meringue. This is the sharper, palate-cleansing bite.

The second is my rose and lychee parfait with rose Turkish delight.

It is one of my favourite combinations. This is the more aromatic and creamier bite.

Finally, I wanted something a little darker and richer and salty, so I invented my salted pretzel and chocolate bars.

When in New York at New Year, I was in the cinema and tucking into a bag of pretzel M&Ms and decided to develop a recipe including the two components.

When I was asked to do the Cutty Sark Valentine's event, I saw it as the perfect opportunity.

■ **Did you use any of the skills you learned on *Bake Off*?**

The skills I had on the *Bake Off* were very basic.

I've since been to Le Cordon Bleu where I've been studying Patisserie for the past year, and I've learned so much. From simple things like plate decoration to more complicated things like making Easter eggs.

Beth Allcock

The Cutty Sark Pub, Ballast Quay, Greenwich., 020 8858 3146, cuttysarkse10.co.uk.

INSIDE

V-Day

Sort where to go and what to do

Five pages of ideas and listings to get you going on Feb 14

P50-55

Valentines at the Radisson Blu Edwardian New Providence Wharf Hotel!

Treat your loved one to an intimate riverside meal at Scoff & Banter, Canary Wharf

With offers from just £45 for an exquisite three-course meal for two by candlelight and a night of romantic music to set the mood for an evening of romance!

Enjoy a romantic night in a luxury Suite overlooking the lights of the City, topped off with Champagne, Chocolates, and Breakfast in Bed with your special someone

Wander across the bridge to complete your romantic getaway with Spa treatments, including a relaxing Couples Massage

For more information and packages, visit:
www.radissonblu-edwardian.skchase.com/valentines

Hotel bookings
t: 0207 9872050
e: resnpw@radisson.com

Spa bookings
t: 0208 8208123
e: eastriverspa@radisson.com

Restaurant bookings
t: 0208 8208136
e: canarywharf@scoffandbanter.com

Radisson BLU EDWARDIAN NEW PROVIDENCE WHARF

Valentine's

Food & drink listings

CANARY WHARF & WIQ

■ **Henry's Cafe Bar**, West India Quay
Take a trip to the Quay for a three-course menu and glass of fizz for £16.95 per head.
Go to henryscafebar.co.uk.

■ **Brown's**, West India Quay
Start Valentine's celebrations a day early at Brown's, which is offering its loved-up menu from February 13-15. Choose from a range of options including ham hock terrine, sirloin steak and brownie indulgence for £29.95pp.
Go to browns-restaurants.co.uk.

■ **The Pearson Room**, Canada Place
Take your date for something new on the Wharf as this elegant eatery – also famed for its vast cocktail list – launches its new menu in time for the big day. Customers who book a table in the restaurant on February 14 will also get a free glass of Prosecco.
Go to thepearsonroom.co.uk.

■ **Royal China**, Westferry Circus
Free yourself from any restrains of a set menu and feast on some delectable dim sum or a host of traditional Chinese dishes this Valentine's. A violinist will be on-hand at the Canary Riverside eatery to add musical romance to your evening.
Go to royalchinagroup.biz.

■ **Plateau**, Canada Square
Add an extra special romantic sparkle to Valentine's 2014 with a five-course menu prepared by Michelin-star chef Allan Pickett. The man at the helm of Canary Wharf's elegant French eatery has devised plates such as vol au vent of Cornish mackerel and wild mushroom and Madeira consomme priced at £70pp including a glass of Champagne.
Go to plateau-restaurant.co.uk.

■ **Zizzi**, Westferry Circus
Treat your loved one to a three-course set menu at this waterside Italian restaurant. A glass of Prosecco is thrown in too, for the price of £21.95pp.
Go to zizzi.co.uk.

■ **Le Secret des Rotisseurs**, Westferry Circus
This French restaurant is enticing customers on February 14 with its welcome drink of Prosecco, fresh blackberries and raspberries, followed up by a Valentines Crush menu. For £30, diners will enjoy a starter, main, side and dessert.
Go to eatlesecret.co.uk.

■ **Iberica**, Cabot Square
Enjoy traditional, hearty tapas at this chic restaurant, perfectly placed for a post-work date. The Valentine's Day menu, at £26pp, includes small plates of lobster and seafood rice and serrano ham croquettes with half a bottle of matching white wine available for an extra £11pp.
Go to ibericalondon.co.uk.

■ **Carluccio's**, Reuters Plaza
If you don't fancy sharing your Valentine's date night with hundreds of others, why not start your celebrations from February 11, with the three courses of romantic Italian indulgence running until February 16. A glass of Prosecco will kick start the celebrations, followed by options such as an antipasti platter, pan roasted cod and a trio of shared desserts.
Go to carluccios.com.

■ **Pizza Express**, Cabot Place Mall
Embrace Italy's romantic traditions and treat your date to three courses and a glass of Prosecco for £19.95. Running throughout the Valentine's weekend, dishes on the special menu include risotto, pizza and lemon torta.
Go to pizzaexpress.com.

■ **Cafe Rouge**, Mackenzie Walk
Speak the language of love over some traditional French fare. Cafe Rouge is offering a trio of courses for £18.95pp – with two glasses of sparkling Cremant for an extra £5 – for those opting for date night.
Go to caferouge.co.uk.

■ **Camino**, Westferry Circus
It pays to be efficient and book your Valentine's Day meal at this Spanish eatery – with a free glass of Cava for those who do so. Then tuck into the restaurant's vast array of tapas dishes, spanning Basque Country charcoal grills, delicious seafood, Spanish charcuterie and shared desserts.
Go to camino.uk.com.

FURTHER AFIELD

■ **Las Iguanas**, The O2
Inject some Latin American vibes into your Valentine's Day with three courses, Cava and a welcome snack of traditional totopos for £25pp. Other dishes to tingle the tastebuds include fajitas, filo parcel with halloumi in a tangy sweet chili sauce and sugar-spiced churros.
Go to iguanas.co.uk.

■ **Radisson**, New Providence Wharf
The Radisson's Scoff and Banter restaurant is offering a three-course menu for £45 including a palate cleanser of mojito granite. The special menu is available from Feb 14-16.
Go to scoffandbanter.com.

■ **Docklands Bar And Grill**, Crowne Plaza Docklands
Head out of E14 and to the Royal Docks for a splash of romance this Valentine's Day. Dine in the hotel's stylish restaurant with a three-course meal at £24.95pp.
Go to crowneplazadocklands.co.uk.

■ **Madame Gautier 'La Technique' Cookery School**, White City
Couples, a candle-lit dinner and wine are all in-store at this west London venue, the only difference? You'll be whipping up your own Valentine's dishes to enjoy, with ballotine de volaille with mushroom, pea and potato puree and creme brulee all on the menu. Starts with a glass of bubbly at 6.30pm on February 14 for £120pp and food to take home.
Go to madamegautier.com.

■ **Amico Bio**, Barbican
Go vegan this Valentine's with the City's first restaurant of its kind. Offering a four-course menu for £35pp on February 14 and 15, relish plates such as tortelloni filled with pear and seitan and vegan cake with amarena cherries – as well as Prosecco, coffee and petit fours to finish.
Call 020 7600 7778 to book.

■ **Hunter 486**, Marble Arch
A seductive menu of aphrodisiac dishes will be on offer to spice up Valentine's Day. For the whole of February – and a price tag of £30pp – couples can enjoy dishes of citrus cured Scottish salmon, spicy chili and energy-boosting avocado.
Go to thearchlondon.com.

RED HOT

We pick out some fashion essentials for the big night

P55

REVIEW V-Day menu at The Gun

P51

THE PEARSON ROOM
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020 7970 0920
info@thepearsonroom.co.uk • thepearsonroom.co.uk

Valentine's

DRINK WITH PAULO BRAMMER

Luxurious fizz to impress on Valentine's Day

1

■ Bouvet Ladubay Saumur, Loire Valley, France NV.
■ £13.49 at Majestic.
■ This winery is owned by the excellent Champagne house Tattinger, delivering brilliant quality for the price. Made with the same classic method but using the regional grape variety Chenin Blanc, this cremant offers elegant notes of white flowers and baked red apples.

★★★☆☆

2

■ Alexandre Bonnet Rose Brut, Champagne, France NV.
■ £26.99 at Waitrose.
■ This Champagne is made from 100% Pinot Noir grapes, which gives the wine real structure and significant backbone. This is a very good value Champagne Rose that gives off aromas of raspberries and delivers an attractive creaminess on the palate.

★★★★☆

3

■ Herbert Beaufort Grand Cru, Champagne, France NV
■ £32 at M&S.
■ Made only from the finest Grand Cru sites this top Champagne shows extraordinary concentration and power. Plenty of complexity with hints of citrus fruit and hazelnut tart. It could be a great start for a romantic evening but it also has what it takes to go with a meal.

★★★★★

Paulo Brammer buys wine for ETM Group, which owns The Gun. Go to etmgroup.co.uk

Savoury and sweet are the perfect match for romantics

Opposites attract at the Thames-side gastro pub ready for V-Day

REVIEW
Valentine's Day menu
The Gun, Docklands

Valentine's Day. All so often a time for cliches, corny statements and chocolate. I've not been struck by Cupid's arrow this particular February – opting to share The Gun's extravagant five-course menu with a friend instead.

But I'm happy to report that this V-Day combo can easily match the strength of a beating heart.

While I'm on the point of extrovert displays of sickly-sweet affection, don't expect tables adorned with confetti hearts.

This chic Docklands gastro-pub is all about elegance and tradition, the perfect setting to spend a sophisticated February 14.

The only neon red you'll see here is that of the keta caviar surrounding the plate of salmon.

And whether you're the lucky couple choosing to spend the evening in the pub's exclusive River Room (£455 for the pair) or downstairs in the rustic, homely restaurant surroundings, you're in for a night to remember.

The show-stoppingly elegant plates of food began with roast salsify veloute, topped with shavings of carbonated apple surrounding an island of a cinnamon donut.

The colourful mixture of blowtorched salmon and rainbow beets

£50
For five courses, tea or coffee and petit fours

Opposites attract, they say. And the luxurious creaminess of the soup balanced perfectly with the delicate sugary shards of fruit.

But the pocket-sized treat usually reserved for dessert was the star, offering a gentle warming hit of spice and sweet homeliness.

The perfect pairings continued with the sensibly-sized second and third dishes, as candied pear successfully enhanced a creamy cannelloni and fresh, earthy broccoli puree, while blowtorched salmon created a crispiness that partnered well with hearty rainbow beets.

Whether you're a veggie or meat-eater, the final savoury offering of venison or lentil and swede Wellington, with heritage veg and a cylinder of pressed spuds offers comfort and glowing warmth.

Then it's time to do battle with the Other Half over the light but oh-so-luxurious chocolate fudge cake, the delicate flavours and creaminess of a passion fruit creme brulee and a dark, inviting coffee mousse.

The desserts were all sprinkled with dehydrated raspberries, (who knew the delicate dots could pack in so much flavour?) meringue and placed atop a rustic board, home-made plinths and a straw nest.

Beauty may well be in the eye of the beholder, but the presentation of the quintet of dishes – finished with chunks of dark chocolate and financier petit fours – rocketed well off the handsome scale. And how successful was the underpinning trait of pairing fruit with veg, sweet with savoury in each dish? A match made in heaven.

The Gun's Valentine's Day menu costs £50 per person for five courses including coffee/tea and petit fours.

Beth Allcock

The Gun, Coldharbour, Docklands, London, E14 9NS, 020 7515 5222, thegundocklands.com.

Is there a theme to the flavour combinations this year?

"How successful was the underpinning trait of pairing fruit with veg, sweet with savoury in the dishes? A match made in heaven."
Beth Allcock

Our verdict

The perfect pairing for Valentine's Day
★★★★★

KAY LOCKETT

Above, will a fight break out over the chocolate fudge cake?
Below, the main course of venison with heritage veg

Vegetarians can enjoy swede Wellington as part of the Valentine's Day menu at The Gun

★ The Gun's head chef **Quinton Bennett** said: "I would just cook sharing food – something nice like a prawn paella. It's something light that would go well with a bottle of white wine like Sauvignon and I'd serve it with light food like grilled vegetables.

"When you have shared food it's more romantic, more intimate and more personal."

Chef's tip for culinary romance on the big day

arts & events CANARY WHARF

FEBRUARY 2014 PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

VISUAL ARTS: KATE MALONE - A CELEBRATION OF CLAY
UNTIL 14 MARCH / LOBBY, ONE CANADA SQUARE / FREE

COMEDY CLUB 4 KIDS
MONDAY 17 FEBRUARY / 6.30-7.30PM (DOORS 5.45PM) / EAST WINTERGARDEN
£7 OR £24 (FAMILY TICKET)
COMEDY CLUB 4 KIDS WORKSHOP
12.30-2PM (DOORS 12.15PM) & 3-4.30PM (DOORS 2.45PM) / £5 OR £10 INC. SHOW TICKET

CANARY WHARF COMEDY CLUB
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY / 7.15PM (DOORS 6.30PM) / EAST WINTERGARDEN / £12

VIVA LA 80S!
THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY / 7.30PM (DOORS 6.45PM) / EAST WINTERGARDEN / £15

AFTER HOURS WITH... ALICE RUSSELL
FRIDAY 21 FEBRUARY / 7.45PM (DOORS 7PM) / EAST WINTERGARDEN / £20

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT CANARYWHARF.COM
twitter @YOURCANARYWHARF

BOOKING Online: seetickets.com / Tel: 0871 220 0260
Booking Fees apply. A maximum ticket order applies to certain events. If you do not require TicketPlan Refund Protection please untick the box on the Order Details page.
All details correct at time of press.

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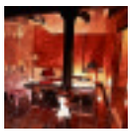
Valentine's

V-Day activity listings

TREATMENTS

■ **Thai Square Spa**, Covent Garden
Opt for indulgence this Valentine's and treat your other half to one of two special experiences at this authentic Thai spa. Loved ones can enjoy the Blissful Couple Package, for £69 per person, with a 15 minute private herbal steam room session, 30 minute back, neck and shoulder and 15 minute foot or head massage, or the Serene option with a 30 minute private steam room experience and a one-hour treatment for £99pp.
Go to thaisquarespa.com.



■ **Re:Spa**, Canary Wharf
If you're struggling to settle on the perfect gift, why not treat your partner to a slice of relaxation. Buy a gift card for more than £100 at Re:Spa and pick up a free gift too, while stocks last.
Go to reeboksportsclublondon.com.

■ **Blink Brow Bar,** Canary Wharf
Get date-ready with a special offer at Blink Brow Bar. The Canada Place outlet is offering an eyebrow shape and longer lasting manicure for £50 until February 14.
Go to blinkbrowbar.com.

■ **K West Hotel and Spa**, Shepherds Bush
Celebrate being single in style with dinner, overnight accommodation and a night filled with free film and popcorn. Treat yourself to a spot of relaxation in the hotel spa and enjoy London's first and only snow paradise for £99.
Go to k-west.co.uk.

TRAVEL

■ Whisk your Valentine off for a weekend by the seaside at **The Valley**, in Cornwall.
Boasting five-star two-bedroom cottages, enjoy roses and Champagne on ice, a three-course meal by candle-light in Cafe Azur and a selection of tapas dishes delivered to the door – as well as a third night for free if a two-night break is booked.
Go to the-valley.co.uk.

■ Passion awaits at **Galgorm Resort And Spa** in Northern Ireland on the banks of the River Maine offering a trio of Valentines packages.
Guests can chose from Love Galgorm from £115pp, Romance at the River Room from £130pp or a Galgorm Love Story from £250pp, all offering one-night stays and a variety of meals, treats and spa access.
Go to galgorm.com.

TO DO

■ **Canary Wharf Malls**, Canary Wharf
A trio of fashion brands will be hosting special pop-up shops. Godiva will be hosting its outlet in Canada Place from February 12-14 while Cadenzza and Jo Malone will feature in the same mall, the former on February 13 and 14 and the latter between February 13-15. ITunes chart-topper Tristan Mackay will play in Cabot Place on February 13 and 14, while pianist Tokio Myers will perform in Jubilee Place between February 13-15.
Go to canarywharf.com.

■ **The Queen's House and The Great Hall,** Greenwich
Surround yourself with letters of love – written by men serving in the Georgian Navy to their wives and mistresses – as part of this new exhibition. Romance abounds in *Love In The Archives*, which also includes a candle-lit tour of the Queen's bedchamber, music from Trinity Laban and two glasses of Prosecco for £46 for two, on February 14 at 7pm.
Go to rmg.co.uk.

■ **Brunel Museum**, Railway Avenue
The iconic venue is offering a host of experiences for couples, from romantic potions and dreamy sit-down banquets in the pop up restaurant, a guided journey in the love boat, cocktails around the fire at the Midnight Apothecary Valentine special. Events from February 14-16.
Go to brunel-museum.org.uk.

■ **The London Eye**, South Bank.
The iconic landmark will be bathed in a red glow as wordsmith Judge The Poet creates his unique language of love compositions for a big-hearted London between February 14-16.
Go to londoneye.com/Valentines.

■ **Concrete**, Shoreditch
Vintage style, rock'n'roll and romance will merge for this '50s Valentine's extravaganza. DJ's Aldo Vanucci and Leo Bedford will be spinning the decks with a selection of funk, soul and ska from 10pm until 2am on February 14. Tickets £7 in advance.
Go to itchyfeetonline.co.uk.

■ **City Cruises**, River Thames
From £105pp on February 14-15, guests can enjoy a Champagne reception and three-course meal as they sail down the Thames. For anyone who proposes, City Cruises is offering 50% off an engagement party or wedding reception.
Go to citycruises.com.

■ **Museum of London**, City
Follow the historical trail of the art of all things saucy and seductive from raunchy Romans to modern-day mating rituals for £10 between 7pm and 10pm on February 14.
Go to museumoflondon.org.uk.

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Whatever your restaurant, bar or venue is offering, advertise with us in

the Wharf

Contact Karen Brodie
020 7510 6055
email: karen.brodie@trinitymirror.com

Valentine's

ESSENTIAL BUYS

For February 14

CLOSET CLOTHING
Almari pink belted pleat dress, Â£60
closetclothing.com

M&S
Limited Collection body, £25
marksandspencer.com

USC
Uncut sequin skirt, £40
usc.co.uk

DOUGLAS BLYDE

The girl who's the guy's best friend

Stephanie Herringer helps her clients create bespoke diamond jewellery

JEWELLERY Diamond consultant tells **Beth Allcock** about picking gems

No-one wants to be sitting at a dinner party with friends and find the girl next to them has got the same ring on," said Stephanie Herringer, whose new business is designed to take the pain out of sourcing and creating bespoke, diamond jewellery.

After offering a helping hand to many of her male friends struggling to find the perfect engagement ring, the City worker – armed with her connections to high end jewellers and global diamond suppliers – turned pro in April.

Describing her offering as a combination of diamond consultancy, sourcing and personal shopper, the 30-year-old spends her weekends and evenings out with clients to identify their preferred design.

Then she'll tap into her wholesale diamond contacts, built up through a network of family and friends, to source the perfect GIA certified stone, before selecting a jeweller to transform their ideas into reality.

"This service does exist in New York but I am the first to do it in London," said Stephanie, who juggles her venture with a full-time career working in the financial markets.

"Of course there are jewellers, there are designers and there are places on the internet where you can buy diamonds.

"I don't sell anything or design anything – I am completely impartial and I am giving people an education.

"I can scour the markets to find the best prices on stones. I am giving something a lot more personalised, exclusive and bespoke."

There's a broad scope to her brand's offering tailored to busy, time-poor City workers and Wharfers, whether they want to create necklaces, engagement rings or earrings.

> **Why is it worth using this bespoke service?**
>
> **"The bottom line is you get something customised, with an average saving of 50% off the store price and comparative quality."**

Although they may not come with an iconic jeweller's box and bow, she said the end product would certainly stand out from the crowd.

Her client base is predominantly men seeking engagement rings but women also call on her advice.

"In the first couple of shops, the men are like rabbits in headlights," she said. "But they become confident with what they are looking at and what they want. They start to understand the prices.

"We are not about copying jewellery at all, it's about a bespoke piece of jewellery, where you have a one-to-one experience.

"The bottom line is you get something customised, with an average saving of 50% off the store price and comparative quality.

"You're going to have something absolutely fabulous that no-one else is going to possess."

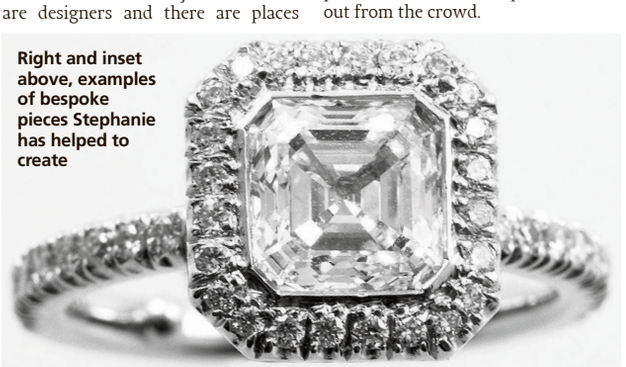
Stephanie said her last client paid £12,000 for a platinum, bespoke engagement ring saving around £15,000 on the store price.

The Hyde Park resident said it was her personalised service and the promise of a lifetime of aftercare from the chosen jeweller, that made her firm sparkle. She said clients who decide to buy at one of the stores viewed instead were under no obligation to her service.

Stephanie said: "It's really nice to be part of a process that is positive and happy. I love to hear stories of how the men are going to propose with the engagement ring and what the lady's reaction was afterwards."

■ Stephanie's consultations are free. If you're still hunting for that perfect Valentine's gift, she said a bespoke pair of stud diamond earrings could be sourced and designed within three days in time for the big day.

Go to sh-diamonds.com.



Right and inset above, examples of bespoke pieces Stephanie has helped to create

QUICK SHOP

Valentine's tips

JO MALONE

Free engraving on new products

★ Make your Valentine's gift of a Jo Malone Candle or cologne that little more special this year.

The Jubilee Place store is hosting a complementary session on Monday, between noon and 4pm, allowing customers the chance to have their partner's initials engraved on their chosen product.

Go to jomalone.co.uk.

MONICA VINADA

Personalise your jewellery buys

An example of the kind of pieces the shop sells

★ Share your creative thoughts and collaborate with a master engraver to produce a personalised piece of Valentine's jewellery this month.

Monica Vinader – one of the newest stores in Canary Wharf's Jubilee Place Mall – is offering customers a complimentary consultation with the expert, as well as engraving, with any purchase.

Jewellery can be adorned with the brand's signature fonts or given a one of a kind twist with the customer's own design.

Engravings and consultations will be held today (Thursday) between 5pm and 8pm and on February 12, running at the same times.

There will also be a chance to access the services on February 13 and 14 between noon and 8pm for last minute romantic purchases.

Go to monicavinader.com for more information.

CHARLES TYRWHITT

Deal's a chance to re-stock shirts

★ Smarten up for the big day or just get in the swing for spring with some quintessential British suit-style.

Canada Place's Charles Tyrwhitt store is getting set for the new season by offering its renowned four shirts for £100 package.

The firm also stocks British-made calf leather shoes, new blazers, jackets and trousers as well as tailored suits.

Go to ctshirts.co.uk.

Health

SLIMMING
BY CAROLINE WATERSTON

WEIGHT LOSS DIARY

I have great news, at last. Six and a half pounds off this week. It is exactly what I needed – and I put it down to Weight Watchers' new Simple Start plan. My boyfriend is also following the eating guide and has managed to lose four pounds. Together, we are on a mission to fight the flab for summer and I can just tell we are going to do it. One piece of bad news too, however. Last time, I failed to give you my weigh in and it turns out I had put on more than I thought. There I've said it. Today I weigh in at 13 stone 7lbs.

- Start: 14st 4½lbs
- Now: 13st 7lbs
- Goal: 10st 7lbs (or as near as)

SIMPLE START SHORTCUTS

★ With only two extra treats a day to use for favourite indulgences WW have come up with some filling and healthy alternatives that you don't need to weigh or measure. Even better news is you can eat them for free so you can eat your extra treats too. I've started making my own jam at WW's suggestion; here's how:

Ingredients
250 g cherries, stoned (or raspberries)
Zest and juice of half an orange

Method
Quarter the cherries (or keep the raspberries whole) and place in a pan with the orange juice and zest and one tablespoon of water. Warm gently over a low heat, so that the cherries begin to soften. Bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring often until the compote is thick and jam like. Enjoy it on a toasted crumpet.

EXERCISE

★ Sometimes, keeping fit can be a drag. But if you find something fun it will keep you motivated. I tried Nadir's Fight Club this week at Reebok Sports Club and I left feeling fighting fit. Shaking up my routine also really helped. I was in agony for days. But it felt great.

DETAILS

■ Caroline attends Weight Watchers at Reebok Sports Club, Canary Wharf. Classes run on Weds and Thurs from 7.30am-1pm. For information about meetings go to weightwatchers.co.uk.

Dance fit at Wharf stores

★ Canary Wharf's Sweaty Betty has launched its Get Fit 4 Free initiative for February. The firm's Cabot Place and Jubilee Place stores will host three more Ballet Bootcamps on Tuesdays and Wednesdays respectively starting at 7.15pm.

Designed by former professional dancers, the free workouts can be booked by calling 020 7513 0666 or 020 7719 0900.

Master the art of Bikram

★ Master the art of Bikram Yoga in baby steps at a one-off session in South Quay. Conny Chitnis, senior teacher and studio director at Bikram Yoga London, will host a special beginners event on Saturday, from noon until 2.30pm costing £20.

Spaces are limited and must be booked at bikramyogalondon.com.

The 8 great fitness myths

ADVICE

Fitness guru **Laura Williams** dispels some of the erroneous beliefs of the wellbeing world

■ Fitness myths have changed. No-one thinks crunches will fix a stubborn tum any more but too many well-intentioned gym-goers now think a six pack lies in a vat of protein shake. It's time to think again.

Lower intensity workouts such as jogging should not be dropped in favour of an exclusive programme of high intensity sessions

GETTY

1 A four-minute workout is as good as an hour long run.
It seems there's never been a better time to jump on the micro-workout bandwagon.

However, longer, easier workouts are not to be overlooked. Longer, slower paced sessions are excellent for building a good aerobic base and slow twitch muscle fibre development. They also enable you to get a good workout without overdoing it.

Shorter, higher intensity sessions are good for boosting metabolism and fitness levels and perfect if you're time-poor, but not every workout you do should be a tough one.

There's also a risk of over-training, which can compromise immunity.

2 On the 5:2 diet, you can eat as much as you like on the normal days.
The 5:2 diet was the diet of 2013. While many found long-term success under the regime, others complained of feeling extra hungry the following day and overeating.

So can you eat what you like on a non-fast day? Absolutely not. All that will happen if you overeat on a feast day is that you'll undo some of your fast day's work and probably end up about even (if you're lucky) over the course of a week.

You will need to exercise that same amount of self-discipline on a non-fast day if you're to see those great results.

3 It's sugar, not fat, that's making your belly swell.
There's no doubt that sugar's the bad guy. But as last week's *Horizon* documentary found, sugar on its own isn't the problem. In combination with fat it's the culprit.

As far as both waistline and health go, fatty carbs like cakes, chocolate, crisps, special fried rice, mayo-laden sarnies, steak and chips, and hot buttered toast are the story behind the bulge.

4 If you do a very high intensity workout, you can eat whatever you like.
No exercise routine in the world will outsmart excess calories. The fact that you feel like you could eat anything after a tough session doesn't mean you should eat anything.

A lot of the calorie-hype of tough workouts comes from their effect on your metabolic rate post-workout.

But as you won't know how much this is for you, best to err on the side of caution.

5 Protein shakes are a great weapon in the battle for weight loss.
Protein shakes have become a popular way of ingesting protein quickly post-workout but, for the average gym-goer, they're unnecessary.

Often packed full of synthetic ingredients, many people find they're still hungry and end up having another meal or snack. You're better off getting your protein from meat, fish, eggs and dairy in your regular meals.

Laura says throwing away the scales and blaming sugar for an expanding waistline are two things to avoid if you're looking to unlock the secret to health and fitness

6 Eating carbs will prevent you from losing body fat.
The science behind this is still ropey. The main reason people lose weight on low carb diets is because you're so stuck for choice and the foods that easiest to overeat are forbidden.

An Indian takeaway means lots of chicken tikka and, well, there's not really an and. Pizza, pasta and sarnies are out and while unlimited bacon and eggs sounds great, the novelty of no beans, toast or hash browns wears off.

Carbs per se are OK – it's just the wrong sort in excess that will prevent you losing body fat.

7 Incidental exercise is as good as going to the gym.
Running up flights of stairs and getting off the bus a stop early are wonderful additions to a regular exercise routine. If you do enough, you could equal the calorie-burn of a couple of shorter gym sessions but the likelihood of you being able climb enough stairs fast enough to rival a structured exercise session is small.

8 Ignore the scales – muscle weighs more than fat anyway.
Muscle is a denser body tissue than fat but it takes up less space and burns way more calories.

If you're looking buff and toned and your clothes fit then by all means ignore the scales. But if you're not and the scales refuse to budge, look at what you're doing.

It's possible that you're training well and doing all the right things in theory but you may need to up your efforts.

It's possible to increase muscle size without losing body fat, in which case you'll end up growing overall.

Follow Laura Williams on Twitter @laurafitness

Let the magic and relaxation wash over all of your senses

Trio of treatments leaves **Beth Allcock** glowing all over as wonderland unfolds in her mind

REVIEW
Back, face, scalp treatment
Quad Health Club and Spa

Who'd have thought it? An *Alice In Wonderland*-style experience opposite the lapping waters of Docklands.

Just like Lewis Carroll's blonde protagonist, I fearlessly jumped down the rabbit hole (well, walked through the door) into the unknown – a four-walled room of bliss, indulgence and something akin to magic.

A trio of treatments with the inviting titles of Serenity, Harmony and Tranquility awaited as well as a choice, similar to Alice's Eat Me, Drink Me dilemma.

"Let your body decide," smiled senior therapist Lilya Serban as she presented me with a choice of two pure white cloths, rolled into small rose-shapes.

It was a sensory test, for me to choose the toner, body oil and serum from ESPA's all-natural range to be used during my massages.

Plumping for the soothing-yet-hydrating rose geranium options, I was all set to sink into a bed of flowers – but not before taking a glance in the magic mirror.

Health club and spa manager Elsa Lombard says her clients were crying out for facilities like these in the Royal Docks

As the treatment room plunged into darkness, Lilya presented a glowing, white-framed looking glass to my now make-up free face.

After switching on a special UV machine it became clear this was no way to determine the fairest in the land – it was an ultra-modern form of skin analysis.

While a little unnerving to see defects highlighted in brash, black splodges – a bit of dehydration here, a small scar there – Lilya's expertise meant when I eventually left the treatment table, I could put plans into practice at home.

Quickly enough, fairytale-mode kicked back in, as I was wrapped in a towel, face down on the table, inhaling relaxing infusions as the hot stone massage began.

A soothing soundtrack mirrored the relaxing, sweeping strokes of the stones as knots in my upper back and neck were gently eased away after a gentle scrub and moisturising session.

It almost seemed too much of an effort to turn over for the facial – although the results were worth it as I saw the fresh, dewy benefits for a couple of days afterwards.

My fairytale ending came in the form of a scalp massage. Inhaling the selection of ESPA scents as the oil was gently worked through my hair was a slice of heaven. Only when I left did I realise my mind hadn't strayed once from relaxing, soothing thoughts. It was a complete escape from reality, a real taste of Wonderland in E16.

The treatment, with or without hot stones costs £98 for 85 minutes.

■ Valentine's packages, starting from £50 including use of the spa facilities, are also available.

Quad Health Club and Spa, Crowne Plaza, Royal Victoria Dock, London, E16 1AL, 020 7055 2000, thequadclub.com.

How did the 85-minute session finish up?

"My fairytale ending came in the form of a scalp massage. Inhaling the scents as oil was worked through my hair was a slice of heaven."

Our verdict

A fairytale wonderland of a relaxing spa experience

★★★★☆

THEY SAY

■ Elsa Lombard, health club and spa manager, spoke about opening the facility.

She said: "This is an amazing thing for me, as for about four or five years, I have been asking for a spa.

"We had customers asking for it and it never happened.

"But it was our owners who have been very generous to invest the money and we opened in November.

"We have got an excellent location, five minutes walk down the road you have Excel – it brings corporates, it brings children. All of them stay at one of the hotels but we are the only one that has something like this.

A treatment room ready for a client

"We are very lucky – we are the only club that has a spa, steam room, sauna and Jacuzzi.

"The thing with our ESPA products in the salon is that they're from the UK, they are natural and they are international as well – people come here for a treatment and that's a product they can find anywhere in the world."

The Quad Health Club and Spa opened in November in Royal Docks

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Women seeking men

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message sent.

MATURE young looking 53 lady, seeking black gentleman for friendship or more, I want to enjoy life for once. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4292032**

KAREN very nice looking mature busty size 14 blonde who loves life, spending time in my home abroad and having fun, seeking similar mature gent for quality times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410477**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0905 002 1952 Box 366019**

ANNE happy go lucky lady who loves wining/dining, affectionate, honest, sincere and down to earth, looking for similar qualities in companion, if that's you pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410291**

SHARON young single mum slim, blue eyes, attractive, likes nights in/out, WLTM kind male/dad to enjoy dates, chats, hopefully leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410279**

ADVENTUROUS attractive lady seeks no strings casual times with discreet gent. **Tel: No. 0905 002 1953 Box 409991**

LUCY Asian origin, 39yr single mum, loyal, loving, fit, romantic, honest, genuine, looking for older gent to romance, look after and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409713**

EASY going cuddly black lady, likes music, animals, seeks friendship, maybe more with nice male in 60's. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410451**

SAM, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1959 Box 408297**

FEMALE 62, widow, seeks male, 62-72, likes travel, TV, meals out, holidays, walks, cycling. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410021**

SINCERE lady, 46, single mum, looking for black/mixed race male of similar age. S London area. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409927**

CATHY happy independent female looking for her soul mate, someone to spend quality time but who also likes their own space. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409909**

VANESSA 32yrs single mum, honest, loving, kind hearted, been hurt in the past enjoys music, reading etc, WLTM my very special Mr Right. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409899**

MARIE slim attractive fun brunette, looking for good times with exciting broadminded male. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409707**

CLAIRE young 39 slim size 10, pretty, outgoing, seeks similar spontaneous male for nights in/out and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409417**

YOUNG 60 blonde, seeking male, 55-70 who I can have fun, laugh with, holidays and days out, who knows. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410181**

59YR old female, looking for gent, 60-65 interested in night out, theatre, dancing and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410067**

63YR old slim blonde, seeks gent 55-70 for happiness, holidays and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410017**

ATTRACTIVE cuddly young 60, N/S, GSOH, likes music, travel, coast, countryside, seeks tall, clean, affectionate male, 58-64 with GSOH for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409699**

CAROLYN friendly, caring, creative, likes meals out, art galleries, travel, poetry, conversation seeking male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409685**

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EASY going female, 50, 5ft 6ins, N/S, likes walks, meals out, nights in, cooking, music, seeks similar N/S, kind, caring male for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409681**

DOWN to earth female, good heart, attractive, fair hair, green eyes, 5ft 7ins, good personality, likes a good time, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409657**

SANDY 60's, likes most things, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409705**

52YR old female, seeks N/S male to share and enjoy life with, 48-56. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409577**

CARING lady, seeking caring Rastafarian for relationship, likes meals out, pubs and walks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409463**

63YR old lady, seeks similar gent, 65-70 who is honest, reliable and loves holidays. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 386319**

SHIRL 69, true romantic, seeks clean shaven, N/S, romantic male for cosy nights in and travelling. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409459**

ANGIE 32 curvy size 16, very attractive, good company and really fun to be with. What are you waiting for? Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409255**

SARAH pretty petite green eyed female, lots of fun, likes children, animals, gym, eating out, running, sports, fast cars, shopping, seeking, nice guy to spend time with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408879**

EASY going 50yr old young at heart lady, Caribbean, honest, sincere, caring, likes music, cooking, meals out, walks, nights in, seeks N/S, honest, sincere male, 49-60 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409399**

WHITE female, 55, seeks white male, 50-55, likes travel, concerts, sports, TV, meals out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409315**

SUE young at heart female, very adventurous and looking for no strings fun with mature man. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409251**

JAN 38yr old attractive lonely female looking for uncomplicated fun times only. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409107**

JOANNA slim attractive blue eyed blonde nurse, divorced with two teenagers, lots of love to give, looking for Mr Right, call me lets put the spark back. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409097**

FLOR beautiful educated European blonde, articulate, seeking similar intelligent well-mannered mature gent to enjoy socialising, conversing and quality times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408293**

CAROL 35yr old self-employed nurse, looking for similar lonely male who likes travel, holidays, theatre and most important tlc. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409085**

VICTORIA 38 fun loving and single looking for fun times with male, preferably Asian. Any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408729**

LIZ attractive blonde blue eyed female with no children/ties, loves country living, animals, seeks male companion for holidays, cosy nights and more. Single dad welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408629**

SUSAN 24yr single mum of two, likes nights in/out, walking, swimming, running, WLTM tall, loyal easy going male to end lonely nights and brighten days. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408287**

ENGLISH Rose, seeks generous thorn for mutually beneficial discreet liaisons, 50-80. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409037**

IS there a gentleman out there? 53, blonde hair, blue eyes, 4ft 11ins, likes nights in/out, seeking gent, 50-60 top treat lady how she should be. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408825**

SOPHIE attractive hard working female, who enjoys dancing and good company, WLTM loving male to enjoy nights out and genuine laughter. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408625**

64YR old West Indian lady, semi-retired, likes meals out, nights in, holidays, seeks West Indian gent, 58-64 for genuine relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408573**

MARG elegant attractive affectionate lady who enjoys many varied interests WLTM genuine male 50-60yrs for mutual indulgences. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408511**

ALEX 35, very attractive, slim, blonde, caring sensitive single mum, likes meals in/out, nice pubs, WLTM similar male/dad to love and care for. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408503**

25YR old very lonely unloved Asian female seeking true love, must be very discreet, enjoy good nights out and able to accommodate cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408249**

CHRIS 39yr old attractive well built sporty lady looking for tall, happy, well built male to enjoy adult companionship, hopefully leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407935**

LUCY truly wonderful brunette who really loves life, seeking sincere male for true friendship with a little romance thrown in for good measure. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407457**

LIZ 24 attractive blonde, green eyes, size 14, likes golf, pubs, comedy, holidays, WLTM professional well built male for romance, tlc and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408303**

HI I am Sally a single 28yr old female, pretty, size 8-10 with a GSOH and fun to be with looking for similar lonely male for mutual companionship, dates and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407951**

VICKY attractive slim 32yr old nurse, new to the market with no hang ups, enjoys nights in/out, dancing, music, looking for caring man for romance and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407035**

BORED fed up and lonely too? Lorraine pretty petite solvent blonde, active, professional, likes nice food/wine, holidays, seeking similar male to spend quality time together. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407007**

KATIE slim racey female, likes cars, horses, dogs looking for tall experienced male who knows how to make me happy and please me. Daytime meets preferable. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 407045**

KEELY blonde 18yr old, blue eyes size 10, busty, stays at home too much and looking for causal fun with older male with OHAC. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 385377**

Men seeking women

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KEV 5ft 1ins, slim, easy going 51yr old guy looking to meet affectionate lady 55-65 yrs, any area for cosy nights in and out. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4285809**

FUN loving male, seeks discreet lady for extracurricular indoor activities, NSA. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4264119**

MALE seeking honest, caring, attractive girl 25 - 42 for LTR who enjoys travel, going out, restaurants / pubs etc. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4277181**

TALL male, 47, kind, caring, honest, loving, seeks female, 30-44 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410515**

IRISHMAN kind, loving, 58, seeks loving female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410409**

JERRY black African, 5ft 8ins, attractive, medium build, seeking big female, size 12-20, max 5ft 7ins, 28-41. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410357**

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BLACK male, 46, kind, caring, easy going, seeks white female, 42-50 for lasting relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410269**

64YR old white guy, seeking female, any race/religion/nationality for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410255**

42YR old male, seeking attractive, caring, honest female for LTR, nights out, meals, pubs, travel etc. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410237**

BUILDER 44, tall, attractive, GSOH, considerate, easy going, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410535**

GENUINE reliable, traditional, sociable, N/S male with GSOH, seeks positive, loyal, slim, kind hearted 60's female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410381**

MALE 41, attractive, intelligent, nice personality, likes cinema, theatre, meals out, seeks caring, slim, attractive female, 30-42 for relationship. Essex/East London. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410327**

ALLEGEDLY handsome blond blue eyed male, 47, genuine, caring, fun loving, GSOH, OHAC, seeks genuine, fun loving black/Oriental/Asian female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409843**

TALL handsome professional Asian male, seeks smart, attractive, slim, bubbly lady for caring, discreet relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410161**

TALL slim, fun loving Asian male, 43, seeks female, any age for discreet liaisons. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409993**

70YR old male, seeks similar female with mutual interests for daytime meets to include lunch and tete a tete. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409989**

MALE 5ft 8ins, likes dancing, gardening, countryside, seeks attractive, caring lady for friendship and romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409951**

TONY 6ft 1ins, slim, 50, down to earth, decent, easy going, genuine, likes meals out, cinema, countryside, animals, seeking similar female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410157**

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SEMI retired solvent gent, 66, active, hoping to find romantic, daytime discreet fun with mature, tactile, feminine lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410145**

BUILDER 44, tall, good looking, GSOH, kind, considerate, easy going, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 410073**

BLACK male, 46, kind, caring, easy going, seeks white female, 43-50 for lasting relationship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409811**

BLACK male, 6ft 2ins, shaved head, seeking white female, brunette for fun times and relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409787**

WARM hearted, honest, kind, caring Indian gent, 60's, 5ft 6ins, medium build, N/S, clean, well dressed, seeks slim female, any age for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409689**

JOHN 65, young, likes golf, rock, jazz, theatre, cinema, seeks lady with GSOH. SE London. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409687**

BUILDER 44, tall, good looking, GSOH, kind, considerate, easy going, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409747**

REGINALD 64, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, slim, divorced, caring, romantic, honest, retired, seeking lady, 60-65 for friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409545**

Men seeking men

MALE looking for assertive male 18-30 for fun maybe more can accommodate. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4279574**

GOOD looking bi guy, mid 50's, passive, slim, seeks assertive, bossy gay guy for friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409671**

WHITE male, 62, medium build, own apartment, clean living, seeks clean shaven Asian guy for fun and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 409225**

JEFF 60, slim, seeking discreet fun with gay/bi male. Can accom. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408323**

Friends

FEMALE seeking male/female for friendship, cruising, holidays etc. **Tel No: 0906 500 3729 Box No: 408935**

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SUZANNE PLUNKETT

FIRE SALE A Christie's employee walks past Joan Miro's *Femme Et Oiseaux (Women And Birds)* at Christie's auction house. The painting was expected to earn £4million-£7million when it was auctioned this week but the sale was called off. Portugal's opposition Socialist Party appealed to a Lisbon court to block the auction of 85 Joan Miro paintings owned by the indebted nation.

NEIL HALL

SEALED WITH A KISS Lance Corporal James Wharton, left, is kissed by partner Thom McCaffrey after receiving the Freedom of the City of London at the Guildhall on Tuesday. Wharton, one of the first openly gay soldiers in the British Army, received his award in recognition of his work with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, tackling homophobic bullying in secondary schools.

SUZANNE PLUNKETT

WEATHER EYE A rainbow appears as a pedestrian crosses one of the Golden Jubilee bridges in London on Friday as bad weather continues to hang around the capital

SUZANNE PLUNKETT

QUICK CHAT

Cast members Michelle Dockery – born in Romford – and Liam Neeson have a laugh during a media event at the Dorchester Hotel to promote the film *Non-Stop* on Thursday. The movie, which also stars Julianne Moore, is due for release at the end of the month. Neeson reprises his role as an action man in a Die-Hard-On-A-Plane-style thriller.

NEIL HALL

HORSE PLAY Revellers dressed in traditional costume perform during a parade celebrating Chinese New Year, the Year of the Horse.

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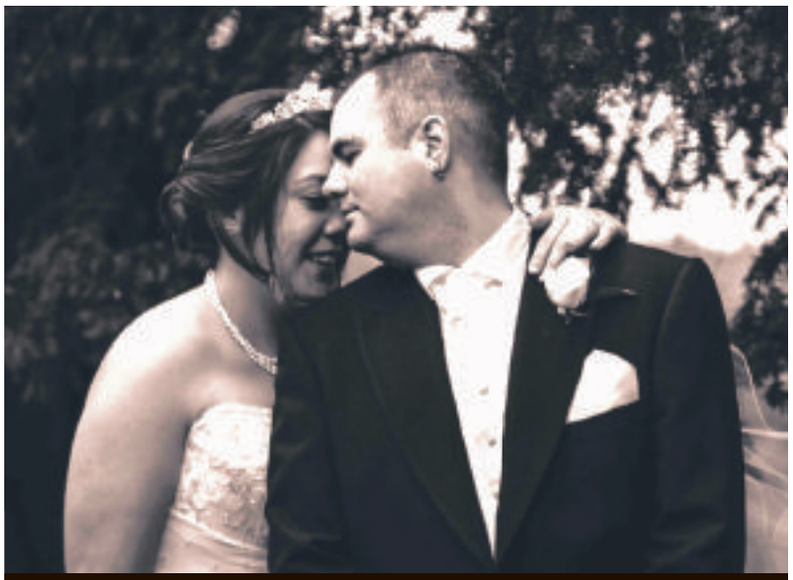

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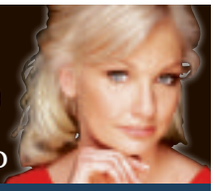
Take 5

Keep your brain ticking over with our selection of coffee break puzzles

Stars

With Claire Petulengro



AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 19
For more call 0905 817 2070

Taking a firmer hand with family doesn't mean hurting them or doing them wrong, it just means standing by what you said. Remember this Aquarius.

PISCES
FEB 20-MAR 20
For more call 0905 817 2071

You and I know you haven't had the easiest year of late and it's time that you cut yourself some slack and gave yourself a break. Take a holiday.

ARIES
MAR 21-APR 21
For more call 0905 817 2060

You're becoming interested in life again after a period where you simply felt as if you were just existing. Welcome back. We've missed you a lot Aries.

TAURUS
APR 22-MAY 21
For more call 0905 817 2061

A disruptive influence has gone and, in the process, has made a very major difference to your day-to-day living. So much so, your plans are now bigger.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
For more call 0905 817 2062

You've had a hard time with family lately but, rest assured Gemini, things are now taking a turn for the better. You're really not on your own anymore.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 23
For more call 0905 817 2063

You seem happier spending time away from a certain person, which says a lot about what you need to do. This is your life, shape it as you desire, not for them.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
For more call 0905 817 2064

You have questions that need answering – and now. Don't be afraid to challenge those in authority or who appear to have power over you.

VIRGO
AUG 23-SEPT 23
For more call 0905 817 2065

Your element of earth is making it hard for you to adapt to changes that close ones want you to make. Luckily your energy levels improve this week Virgo.

LIBRA
SEPT 24-OCT 23
For more call 0905 817 2066

From today you should be well on the way to shaping up your family as you had dreamed. A younger face finally comes round to your complex way of thinking.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 21
For more call 0905 817 2067

Your sign likes to be in charge, that we know. But all you can do when it comes to family is to give them advice and be there to pick them up if they fail.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 22-DEC 22
For more call 0905 817 2068

Why are you keeping everything to yourself when you have good friends and family who are willing to share your load? Halve that problem.

CAPRICORN
DEC 23-JAN 20
For more call 0905 817 2069

You come into contact with a new crowd and family may be put on the back burner as you decide to do what you want for a change. Strike out alone.

Contact our psychics to get a FREE personal CD of your reading

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0906 174 2078
To pay for psychic reading by credit card, call 0800 063 0909

Live text
Text a Psychic: Just text CLA13 and your question to 86010 and one of my psychics will give you a reading

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Astrology calls cost 75p per minute and last approx 4mins. Psychic calls cost £1.50 per minute from BT landlines (other networks may vary). Calls from mobiles may be higher. Psychic lines are open 7am-2am daily. Callers must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. All calls are recorded. Texts cost £1.50 per message and may take two messages. For entertainment purposes only. Customer services 0800 140 9049. PhonePayPlus regulated. SP, Pronto Media, PO Box 199, Selby, YO8 1BP

Dinner and a Movie

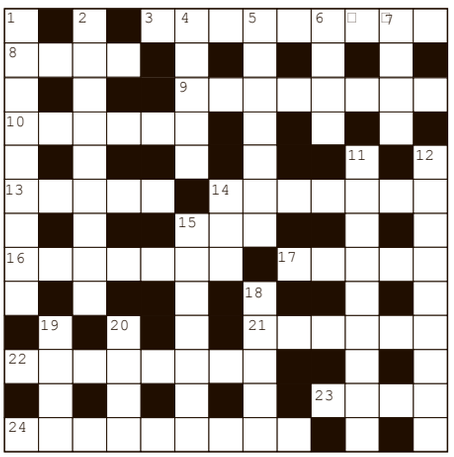
★ Fancy winning dinner and a movie for you and a friend? We've teamed up with West India Quay's Via and Cineworld West India Quay to offer two burgers, two bottles of Budweiser (or a bottle of wine) and a pair of tickets to the cinema.

To be in with a chance of winning, just tell us the name of the actor, pictured here who stars in the rebooted version of action flick *Robocop*.

Email your answer to newsdesk@wharf.co.uk with "Movie Night" in the subject line. The closing date for entries is February 13.

You must include your name and postal address.

Crossword



ACROSS

3. At the present time (9)
8. Fever (4)
9. Vegetables (8)
10. Next to (6)
13. Firearm (5)
14. Easily broken (7)
15. Fodder type (3)
16. Pig's foot (7)
17. Punctuation mark (5)
21. Colour (6)
22. Decode (8)
23. Smear or smudge (4)
24. Genuine (9)

DOWN

1. A vicious act (9)
2. Behave too cautiously (9)
4. Open sore (5)
5. A hold-up (7)
6. Shipshape (4)
7. Tells fibs (4)
11. Take apart (9)
12. Small pruning shears (9)
14. Distant (3)
15. Pagan (7)
18. Dog with short legs (5)
19. Bill of fare (4)
20. Desire (4)

ACROSS: 3. Currently; 8. Ague; 9. Cabbages; 10. Beside; 13. Rifle; 14. Fragile; 15. Hay; 16. Trotter; 17. Comma; 21. Orange; 22. Decipher; 23. Blur; 24. Authentic.
DOWN: 1. Barbarity; 2. Pussyfoot; 4. Ulcer; 5. Robbery; 6. Neat; 7. Lies; 11. Dismantle; 12. Secateurs; 14. Far; 15. Heathen; 18. Corgi; 19. Menu; 20. Wish.

Sudoku

EASY

2	3	9	7	6	4		8	5
7	5		1				4	2
6		4	8	2	5		9	7
1		7			8	2		9
3		6	2			7	1	
	2		4	7	1		6	
	9		3		6	4		1
8		1	5	4	2	9	3	6
	6						2	8

HARD

		3				6		
	8				6			4
	7				4		3	2
5			3	9				
	4		5		2			
9							1	
7	9							
8		6		4				3
			9					7

GUIDE

In order to complete Sudoku, readers should fill in each of the grids so that every column, row and 3x3 box within the squares to the left contains the digits 1 to 9. No repetition of digits is allowed within any of the sequences. Why not time yourself and see whether you can beat your best with next week's puzzles?

The Wharf's Sudoku puzzles are supplied by sudoku-puzzles.net
For more free brainteasers including Futoshiki, Nonogram and Samurai, go to the website

League celebrates winners

As **The Wharf League** comes to an end and begins again, PowerLeague celebrates the heroes of the past campaign

The Wharf **has been sponsoring Wednesday night football at PowerLeague where five-a-side teams from across the capital do battle over 14 weeks.**

Camden Pathway were the overall champions in the three division tournament. Here's the total run-down of the winners. ***The new season has just started but slots are still available for team entry – email docklands@powerleague.co.uk for details or to enter.***

Left, Division One runners up Athletic Pasty celebrate their result Below, Division Two winners PCFC display their silverware Bottom, Division One winners Camden Pathway celebrate with Ardit Prenci

Centrepoint's Ardit Prenci was Division Three player of the season

DOUGLAS BLYDE

Division One player of the season was Nesta Dodo of Carlos Has The Eyes

the Wharf LEAGUE

FIRST RESULTS

DIVISION ONE

Pavilion Casuals	0
Athletic Pasty ●	10
Camden Pathway FC	14
PCFC	5
Landas Pandas	11
Cavendish Allstars	14
M3SSI is Back	10
Weds Vac 1	0

DIVISION TWO

Wed Vac D2	0
Abou	10
Bayer Neverlusen	15
Jubilee Utd	9
Wed Vac D2 X	0
Hurford Salvi Carr ●	10
Wed Vac Div 2	0
Weds Vac D2 X	0

DIVISION THREE

FC Poor Toe	11
Lads On Toure	7
FC Hangover ●	10
Wed Vac D3	0
ISS Tigers	9
Efan Ekoku's Elite	8
Newport Dodgers	3
Centrepoint	7

First games on January 29.
● = Current league leaders.
The Wharf League is played at ***Powerleague*** *in Crossharbour. Go to powerleague.co.uk.*

THE FANS' ROAR

By Ian Toal | Millwall Supporters Club

Dodging drop not simple

Saturday's disastrous 3-0 home defeat to Reading has shown it won't be a simple task for Ian Holloway to keep Millwall up this season.

Some supporters might have thought getting rid of Steve Lomas and appointing Holloway would be sufficient to give us the results we need to move away from relegation, but a lot of work needs to be done.

Many of the crowd left the ground talking about Holloway's disastrous substitutions.

He brought on striker John Marquis and winger Lee Martin to join earlier substitute striker Jermaine Easter and starting strikers Steve Morison and DJ Campbell to make it a four-pronged attack-line, which saw all shape to the team disappear and we quickly conceded a second and a third goal.

Truth is, even though those substitutions backfired, we were already losing 1-0 at the time and unable to string anything decent together before we lost shape.

We might have got something from the game before the gamble from the manager, but it was unlikely given how poorly we had played.

Liability: Stephen Bywater was to blame for a goal

> "Truth is we were already losing 1-0 before the subs

It's not nice to single out players in a negative way, but second-choice goalkeeper Stephen Bywater, who was filling in for injured David Forde, managed to cause the first Reading goal by dropping a simple high ball.

He drops at least one cross or high ball a match so I hope Forde is not going to be missing for much longer. I'm afraid Bywater is a liability and, if the big Irishman is going to be out for anything longer than a week, we are going to have to get a loan signing.

Holloway instead chose to strengthen his squad in other areas before the loan window shut. Shaun Williams, signed from MK Dons, looks a decent player with a good touch operating both in midfield and defence against Reading.

Midfielder Ed Upson signed on a two and a half year deal from Yeovil. He scored the winner against us for his old side back in August.

Striker Simeon Jackson has joined until the end of the season after having his deal with German outfit Eintracht Braunschweig cancelled. Loanee right-back Ryan Fredericks had his stay extended until the end of the season.

Hopefully these players will bring fight to this side. We need to pick up points quickly as we sit precariously outside the relegation zone by just two points and have a tough away game next.

Burnley v Millwall, Sat, 3pm.

Foreign legion are Addicks' big hope

CHARLTON

Will overseas players replace the stalwarts?

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

Charlton defender Michael Morrison hopes the foreign legion's arrival at the club will help them avoid the drop.

Yohann Thuram-Ulien, Reza Ghoochannejhad, Loïc Négo, Astrit Ajdarevic and Anil Koc have all joined the side in the last couple of weeks.

And while the Addicks have lost key players Yann Kermorgant, Dale Stephens and Ben Alnwick in the transfer merry-go-round, Morrison is determined to look on the positive side.

"Obviously we lost a couple on deadline day, but we have brought in a few more," he said.

"They are energetic and want to do well for themselves and it does lift you. When new players come you want to stay in the team and play.

"It takes time to settle in if you move to any club, let alone country, but there's a few of them here now. The majority of them speak good English so there is no language barrier, which is the most important thing for settling in.

"They come with good calibre so hopefully they will keep us up, but only time will tell."

Charlton v Birmingham, Sat, 3pm.

GETTY

Defender Michael Morrison in action for Charlton

Third defeat on the trot

BASKETBALL London Lions suffered their third defeat in a row when they were beaten in the BBL Trophy on Saturday. Worcester Wolves won 82-73 in the first round of the cup at the Copper Box Arena. Chez Marks top scored with 21 points and Joe Ikhinimwin hit 15 but it was to no avail. The Lions host Durham Wildcats at 7.30pm on Saturday and will try to avenge the defeat they suffered two weeks ago. Match begins at 7.30pm.

WEEKEND FLUTTER WITH THE RACING POST

RACING

■ **Al Ferof** can enhance his claims for the Cheltenham Gold Cup by winning the Betfair Denman Chase at Newbury on Saturday.

The son of Dom Alco ran a solid race when third in the King George at Christmas, and should enjoy the return to a left-handed track.

Ed Quigley

FOOTBALL

■ **Swansea** have had a tough start to the year but their injury problems are subsiding and they should have the edge over Cardiff in the south Wales derby.

In-form striker Wilfried Bony is a match-winner and they will be keen to impress Michael Laudrup's successor.

Dan Childs

For daily expert advice, top tips and the latest news from our experts go to racingpost.com

Sport Wharf

WE'VE GOT THE POWER
Players and teams celebrated as The Wharf League concludes P63

WEST HAM

Beating the Swans may give us a real bounce

Kevin Nolan, right, celebrates scoring with George McCartney

Rob.Virtue
@wharf.co.uk

WEST HAM'S George McCartney believes last weekend's victory over Swansea could provide a springboard to move the side to safety.

The defender said a lack of goals has been the side's undoing but Kevin Nolan's double against the Swans showed what the team are capable of.

"We just haven't turned those clean sheets into wins, especially at the start of the season, but we've now got players back from injury and we're starting to show how strong our squad is," said McCartney.

2 Goals from Kevin Nolan against Swansea

"Hopefully now we can keep it tight at the back, score goals and climb the table quickly.

"We're looking forward now to a big game at Aston Villa coming up.

"Saturday has given us a bit more confidence and hopefully we can kick on now."

The Hammers were dealt a blow this week when the Football Association upheld Andy Carroll's red card against Swansea.

The striker will now sit out three matches. Carroll tweeted: "Disgraceful!!!" following the FA's judgment on Tuesday.

Aston Villa v West Ham, Sat, 3pm.

Gymnast, 14, caps her best year with award

AWARDS

The first Brit to do the double-double wins top title at celebration of sport

Beth Allcock & Rob Virtue
The Wharf

A fantastic 2013 for Rio medal hopeful Tyesha Mattis saw her named Canary Wharf Sports Personality of the Year last week.

Highlights for the 14-year-old gymnast included captaining the GB team at the Australian Youth Olympics Festival in Sydney and leading them to silver. The tournament saw Tyesha win gold on vault and bronze on beam and bars.

Also in the last 12 months she performed the "double-double" move – a double twisting double backward somersault – becoming the first Brit to pull it off in international competition.

"I didn't expect to get the award so I'm really happy," said Tyesha, who trains at East London Gymnastics Club.

"It's been my best year capped off by doing the double-double. The Olympics are in my mind but this year the focus is on the Euros."

Coach Lorraine Atkinson said: "The GB team is really excited about Tyesha and she's a medal prospect for Rio. It looks promising."

Another big winner at Canary Wharf groups annual awards ceremony, held to celebrate grass roots sport in east London, was Tower Hamlets BMX Club, which began sessions at the end of 2011 at Mile End.

Before that it was based at Haggerston where members used to cycle along the canal.

The club won the Group Achievement Award at the East Wintergarden event last Thursday for its rapid growth, which has seen it work with more than 1,000 young people.

Paulo Cotrim, who runs the group, said: "Moving to the track at Mile End has made a big difference and we're now able to run a wide variety of sessions.

"Recognition like this prize will help us grow as a club and get more people involved.

"We do a lot of work with schools but it's hard to reach out to those living locally who don't like going over the other side of the road."

Meanwhile, Ascension Eagles Prophecy scooped the Junior Team of the Year prize.

Angela Green, coach of the group, who train for competitions in Gallions Reach, said: "I'm really surprised, because we were up against some amazing clubs that have achieved great things.

"This is really pleasing for the kids – they made the European championships last year, which was a really big deal for them and it's nice to finish the season with this award.

"We've now got a competition on February 15 in Worcester, which is our first regular competition of the year.

"The club has 20 members and they are all individuals but when they come together, what they achieve is just so special."

The final big winner of the evening was FC Bartlett. The football club won the Albert Daniels League Cup last season.

Tyesha Mattis, who captained the GB team at the Australian Youth Olympics was presented with the Canary Wharf Sports Personality of the Year award by legendary cricketer Devon Malcolm last Thursday

Below, left Malcolm poses with members of Tower Hamlets BMX Club, which won the Group Achievement Award

Shock triumph as Rosslyn Park fail

RUGBY Blackheath caused a shock with victory over high-flying Rosslyn Park at the weekend.

The south-east Londoners won 15-12 away to the second placed side, inflicting their first home defeat of the season on them.

Tries from Hamish Graham, pictured, and Dave Allen were crucial in Blackheath's win.

Blackheath entertain Coventry at 3pm on Saturday.

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